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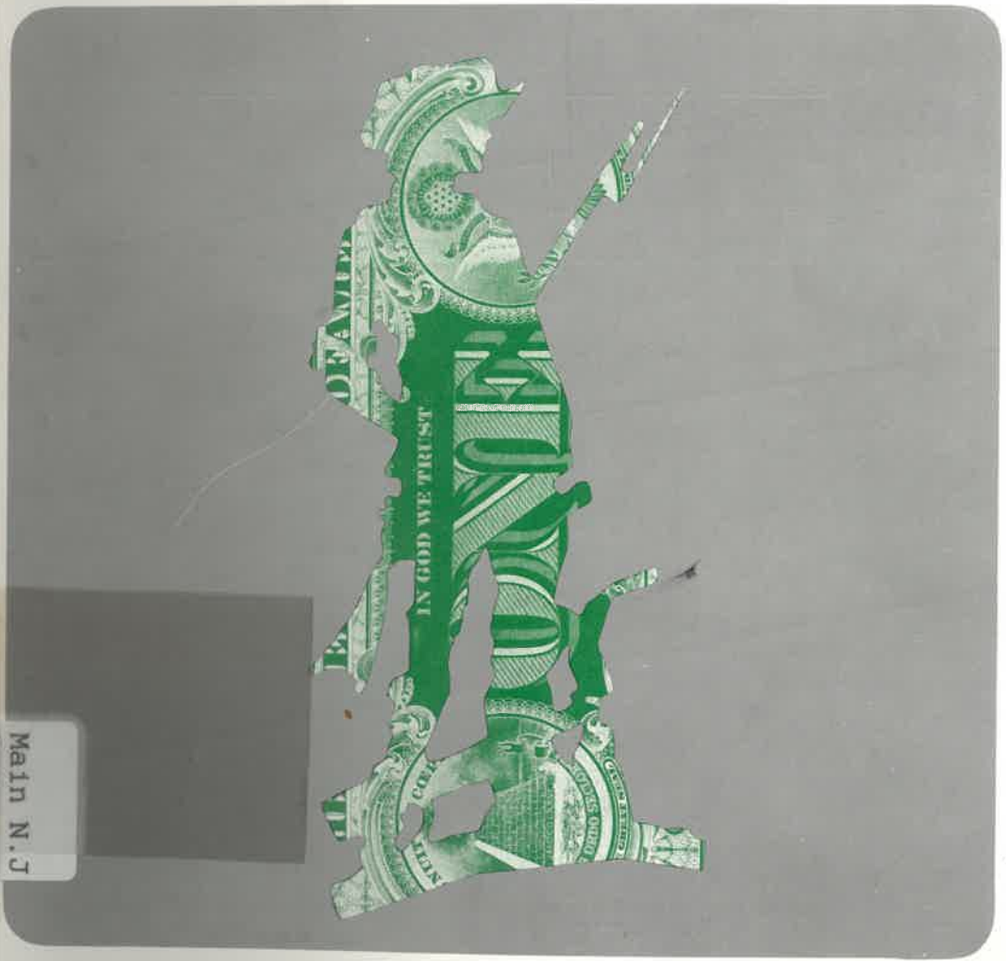
THE WAR ON POVERTY

One City's Story

A Documentary Report of Newark's United Community Corporation

1964-1974



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A Documentary Report of Newark's
United Community Corporation
(1964-1974)
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Prologue

Too much of the time social change is guided by those learning from their own experience. The pattern seems to be to start from the very beginning and to ignore what others may have so painfully learned. We have commissioned this documentary report in the belief that a concise history of the Newark experience could make a substantial contribution to expanding the learning opportunity of all those interested in the dynamics of community action.

So that the flow of the action could be seen more clearly, many details including certain events, names and supporting data have been eliminated. I believe this is the correct direction when one is seeking to be helpful to others, outside the community involved.

The focus, as much as possible, has been placed on the problems and characteristics of American urban life where poverty, educational deficiencies, unsympathetic political structures, and economic stress have been the dominant facts of life in the 1960s and 1970s.

Free Lance Associates interviewed many of the principal figures in the story, and sought to verify the accuracy of all information through numerous direct and secondary sources. We regret any factual errors, and respect different opinions as to causes and consequences.

We want to give thanks to those who over the years gave so much to build an effective United Community Corporation in Newark. They had no choice but to learn by doing; hopefully, those who continue the effort will benefit by their experience.

Lucile Puryear
Executive Director
United Community Corporation

Foreword

On January 8, 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson, in his State of the Union message, called for a War on Poverty to eradicate "the paradox of poverty" from the richest nation in the world. Ten years later, the administration was in the process of dismantling the Office of Economic Opportunity, the chief agency in the War on Poverty.

In the intervening decade, there had been a tremendous amount of action as the nation undertook a massive effort to deal with the causes and effects of poverty. Chief actors in the drama were the men and women in the community action agencies who devised new programs to deal with the problems of hunger, housing, disease, illiteracy, crime, and premature death. Societies have frequently fought against hunger and ignorance. But this time the victims themselves were to be involved in the struggle. "Maximum feasible participation" of the poor in both planning and carrying out the effort was written into the Economic Opportunity Act signed into law on August 20, 1964.

Judgments on the success or failure of this ten-year effort have been made with little reference to local events. This case study is an attempt to focus on one community action program in one place during those ten years. It is not typical, because every community is shaped by its own peculiar characteristics, yet it illustrates what happened in many urban poverty programs between 1964 and 1974. The basics are the same. This is the story of Newark, New Jersey's war on poverty: the planning, the people, the programs, the goals that were met and missed, the mistakes committed, the changes that took place, the history that was made.

There are two reasons for writing this history of Newark's poverty program. First, the actual story of what the poverty program meant in the arena in which the battle was fought has never been recorded. Until it is, judgments about success or failure are premature. Second, what was learned in Newark is exportable. Whatever the fate of the Office of Economic Opportunity, the CAP agencies, in one form or another, will survive. Those survivors can learn much from the experience of Newark's CAP agency: what proved effective, what didn't work, and what, with modification, might be made to work for others.

The specter of poverty still hovers over the nation. The number of poor in 1974 is much the same as the number in 1964, causing many to conclude that the War on Poverty made little difference. This story of Newark's United Community Corporation refutes that snap judgment.

Chapter 1
Organizing for Battle

As the Congressional debate over the Economic Opportunity Act warmed up in the spring and early summer of 1964, the mayors of the country began to smell money. Millions of dollars a year were apparently going to be poured into the nation's cities and rural slums in an all-out effort. Something called a Community Action Agency had to be set up to receive the funds.

The Mayor of Newark, Hugh J. Addonizio, was eager to get in on the ground floor. A former Congressman, he knew the ways of Washington and the importance of moving fast. Before the Act became law, he telephoned C. Willard Heckel, Dean of Rutgers Law School in Newark. The Mayor was calling a meeting of thirty to forty community leaders, "do-gooders," according to Heckel, "the kind of standard group that is always called on," to discuss how Newark might tap the new resource. They were a mix of the city's major businessmen, religious leaders, educators, and ethnic groups.

There was no question that Newark needed the money. In many ways, it was the foremost slum in the country. Whites were fleeing the urban decay at an ever-increasing rate, their number dropping from two-thirds to half of the population in the short span from 1960 to 1964 alone. The influx from the South and Puerto Rico brought people unprepared for jobs or, indeed, for urban living. Of Newark's 405,220 people living in the city that summer, nearly 20% of the families fell below the poverty line—then defined as an annual income below $3,000 for a family of four. Unemployment statistics showed Newark at twice the national average, and four times the national average for Newark's non-whites. The figures do not include those who had simply given up looking for work, or those so underemployed that they could not make a living wage.

The health statistics showed an appalling picture of the ravages of poverty. The city could claim title to the highest maternal mortality rate in the nation, the highest rate of new tuberculosis cases, the highest incidence of venereal disease, and the second highest infant mortality rate. It ranked among the top ten in the known number of drug addicts. Alcoholism was rife. Fully 65% of the city's dwellings were infested with rats.

There were other distinguishing marks. Newark had the highest crime rate in the nation. It also had the highest percentage of sub-standard housing.

A CAP Agency Is Born

By any index of poverty, then, Newark qualified for the money Congress was talking about, if it could organize itself to meet the federal guidelines. The first step was to set up this new entity called a Community Action Agency. Surprisingly enough, at that first meeting of the "do-gooders," Dean Heckel mentioned that there already was such a private non-profit organization called the United Community Corporation. It had been set up jointly a year earlier by Rutgers and the city's Board of Education to help junior high school drop-outs. It was meant to be merely a funding receptacle, a paper corporation, and had languished because no money had been raised. Dean Heckel was its president. All that was needed was a simple rewriting of the charter. With that, the United Community Corporation became Newark's CAP agency.

It was a more difficult matter to reconstitute the membership in order to involve the poor. This would be a federal requisite. Who are the poor? How do you get to them and involve them? "My political science friends were of little help," Dean Heckel recalled. Some of the "do-gooders," however, already had lines out to the poor. The religious leaders, for example, included Monsignor Joseph H. Dooling, director of the Archdiocese of Newark and head of the Mount Carmel Guild, Newark's leading Catholic charity. Dean Heckel also ranked high in Presbyterian councils. Among the black leaders were Kenneth Gibson, co-chairman of the Business and Industrial Coordinating Committee set up to find jobs for blacks and Puerto Ricans, and former Assemblyman George Richardson. Representing the business community were Charles Garrison of Bambergers department stores and Francis Quillan of Prudential Life Insurance. Although there was still no official announcement about the UCC, these men quickly began to spread the word that a new organization was being formed. They began to involve a cross-section of the population, including other black and Puerto Rican leaders, in their early planning sessions. Membership was open to anyone over 20 (later lowered to 15) who lived or worked in Newark. As CAP agency for the entire city, it was expected that the UCC would coordinate Newark's War on Poverty; it would funnel money to existing agencies whose proposals it approved, or to new ones it helped to create.

In late July, the Senate passed the Economic Opportunity Act; in early August, the House passed it. The first appropriation of $947.5 million was to last through June, 1965. President Johnson signed the Act on August 20, and that afternoon Mayor Addonizio met with Sargent Shriver, head of the Office of Economic Opportunity, to ask for anti-poverty funds for a nine-point program that the UCC had tentatively agreed to. Even though the UCC was not yet formally organized as the CAP agency, the Mayor was off and running.

As if to underscore the need for federal action, riots had broken out in the cities during the summer the bill was being considered. In July, Harlem and Rochester had experienced riots. In early August, they came closer and closer to Newark. First Jersey City, then Paterson, then Elizabeth. But not Newark, where, it was said, the Mayor had kept the lines of city government open to blacks. Addonizio had also gained considerable federal aid for Newark in the past. From the Department of Labor, Addonizio proudly announced at the end of August, the city would get a grant to train 500 public housing tenants for jobs. The training would be a joint effort of Newark's Housing Authority, The Leaguers (a Negro civic group), Boys Clubs, the Felix Fuld Neighborhood House, and the Essex County Urban League. All of these organizations were to become deeply involved in the UCC.

The state, too, was gearing up for the poverty drive. In October, New Jersey's Governor Hughes set up a new Office of Economic Opportunity. He hoped that New Jersey would get seven to ten million dollars the first year, but no one knew how it would be divided, or when.

On November 2, when the UCC elected its officers and adopted new by-laws, its metamorphosis into Newark's CAP agency was complete. There were 53 people on the board of trustees, representing civil rights, business, labor, education, the clergy, and municipal government. Five seats, however, were to belong permanently to the political and educational "Establishment": the Mayor, two Councilmen, the Superintendent of Schools, and the president of the Board of Education. The others were elected for three-year terms, a third to be elected each year. Dean Heckel continued as president; among the officers were other members of the original group, including Francis Quillan and Kenneth Gibson. In addition, there was Timothy Still, a Newark-born black and chairman of the Joint Council of Public-Housing Tenants Association, and Miss Hilda Hidalgo, secretary of the Council of Puerto Rican Organizations.

The aim was to represent all segments of the community. Yet at the first official announcement of the UCC's existence on November 4, the cry went up from several old-line Negro organizations, including the Newark Human Rights Commission, that the UCC had overlooked them in their choice of trustees. As a result, the board was steadily enlarged. But there would always be those who felt "overlooked," just as there would always be those who felt the UCC was controlled by the Mayor.

A Kitty Is Raised

Following creation of the corporation, the next step was to get a kitty together for start-up costs. Three groups had agreed to contribute a total of $45,000. The City Council, the Board of Education, and the Welfare Federation, which represented the business community, would each put up $15,000. But none wanted to be the first to give. The Board of Education became doubly hesitant when one of its lawyers argued that the

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board could not, constitutionally, give public funds to a private organization. Heckel, a constitutional expert, was equipped to deal with that argument, and persuaded the Board of Education lawyer to accept the widely held notion that private, non-profit organizations could receive public funds if they performed government functions. "So the board got its check ready," Heckel said. The business community followed suit.

But the City Council was harder to budge. From the Councilmen's point of view, the possibility of millions of dollars of extra funds each year for Newark meant, first of all, jobs and patronage. They saw their $15,000 contribution as a bargaining tool, and laid down two conditions for their ante: all nine Councilmen would have to be seated on the UCC's board of trustees, and the Council must be consulted when individuals, and especially the executive director, were hired.

"They made it clear," Heckel said, describing the November meeting of the UCC executive committee with the City Council, that they wanted jobs and patronage.

" 'What's in it for us?' they asked.

"We said, 'Nothing.'

" 'Ridiculous,' they answered.

" 'O.K.,' we said, 'We'll leave here—to go over and tell *The Newark News* your stand.' "

The threat didn't hang in the air long before the UCC got the $15,000. Later in the month, all Councilmen who were not on the UCC's board were appointed honorary, non-voting trustees.

This was merely the opening shot in the running battle that the UCC was to have with the City Council throughout the years. Patterns were being established early.

An Executive Director Is Hired

The hiring of the executive director was important from everyone's point of view. The UCC, believing that Newark deserved the best that could be found, had asked Charles Garrison, who was a trustee and head of personnel for Bambergers, to institute a nationwide search. It would be ideal, of course, if the right person could be found in Newark, or at least New Jersey, but no geographic limits were set. From the city officials' point of view, the job was a plum. Already it was rumored that the salary would rival that of the mayor, $25,000. A politician likes to give that kind of job, with the power it entails, to someone who will be useful.

The search narrowed down to six candidates, and then down to one man from New York—Cyril Tyson. Tyson, a black Catholic, was highly qualified. He had helped to set up New York City's Commission on Inter-group Relations. Even more important, he had helped to conduct the in-depth study of Central Harlem and its "powerlessness" (with Kenneth Clark and the late Kenneth Marshall) that became the foundation of Haryou Act, an important and boldly conceived new agency for ghetto youth.

When the search committee approached him about the job, Tyson recalled in a 1974 interview, he was planning to go into private business. But, if Newark was going to mount an all-out attack on poverty, he was interested. He had only one question for the search committee: "Are you serious?"

The committee convinced him that it was, and Tyson accepted the job for one year, starting January 1, 1965, at a salary of $23,000. He would amass the base line data on the needs, set up the structure in a way that would develop Newark leadership, write the proposal for the planning grant, define staff requirements, work out the budget, negotiate with the Washington and regional offices, and then leave.

Members of the City Council, when they heard of the appointment, expressed indignant outrage to the newspapers, not only at the high salary but at bringing in an "outsider." Such expressions were to punctuate the story whenever high-level UCC jobs were filled.

Tyson's first act on arriving in Newark, he remembered, was to telephone the Mayor. As Newark's black population increased—it was almost half black then—Mayor Addonizio's job security diminished. Already there were stirrings about electing a black mayor and Addonizio was point-blank in confronting Tyson with the probability that he had been "imported" to be groomed as Newark's first black mayor.

"But I'm not even a resident," Tyson said.

"How do I know you don't have a room at the Y?" Addonizio replied.

If the Mayor had approved Tyson's appointment, as some naturally believed, at least the Mayor's fears were reasonable and out in the open. Six years later, someone from the UCC would replace Addonizio as mayor, not Tyson but a UCC trustee, Kenneth Gibson. And, two years after that, Addonizio would be in federal prison, serving a ten-year sentence for corruption.

Chapter 2
Planning Newark's War on Poverty

Until suitable quarters could be found, the new executive director was given a tiny office on the first floor of the Board of Education. The only money on hand was the $45,000 referred to earlier, the only clerical staff, the occasional services of a Kelly girl.

Tyson's main task in those early days of 1965 was to plan. By education (he had a master's degree in sociology), and by experience (with Haryou Act and city government), he understood planning and the dynamics of working with community and government agencies. But the War on Poverty called for new approaches and new mechanisms.

"We were all very excited about the idea of maximum feasible participation of the poor," Heckel said. That victims of poverty could have an important role in planning its eradication was a bold democratic principle that had never before been tested.

Although Tyson had to write the proposal for the initial planning grant quickly to get some federal money flowing in, he was intent on getting the process of maximum feasible participation working from the start. This was to be the heart of the program, and Tyson is quick to give credit for working out the process to Rabbi Jonathan Prinz, who was one of the UCC's founders.

Goals and Issues

Before any planning could begin, goals had to be set. Tyson wanted the UCC's goals to come from the community, rather than be handed down from the board. But to start the process, he suggested four rather grandiose goals the board might consider at public meetings in the areas of training, motivation, education, and health. The UCC, he offered, might aim to insure:

1. that every willing worker in the community could obtain the skills and employment necessary to raise and maintain his family income above the poverty threshold;

2. that each family has motivation, adequate economic opportunities, and suitable environmental conditions to break the cycle of poverty and foster sustained self-improvement;
3. that each child receives an education that prepares him for useful employment; and
4. that no member of the community suffers from disease or malnutrition due to lack of sufficient financial resources.

Grandiose as the goals were, Tyson wanted the board to discuss them with the membership for a strategic reason. It would, he said, "give individuals with different ideas the opportunity to state their views," and help "to isolate areas of substantial disagreement [so that disagreements could be resolved] before any detailed plans are developed."

First, however, the board of trustees would have to reach workable positions "on a number of difficult issues." Tyson identified five crucial questions of priority that are still being argued over today.

1. Should primary emphasis be given to poverty prevention or poverty alleviation, or both?
2. Should the marginal poor be given preference over the hard-core poor or should it be the other way around?
3. In view of the degree of public and political acceptance of the UCC programs, what weight should be given to the public relations value of a program?
4. Should the community concentrate on programs whose effectiveness has been proven, or should it experiment with new programs?
5. To what extent should the programs be focused on existing participants, as opposed to expanding program coverage to include more poor people, given the fact of relatively limited funds both now and in the foreseeable future?

Since there was as yet no staff, Tyson's early efforts had to be conducted through the board of trustees. The board was trying to build membership in the UCC. Its meetings were held at various places throughout the city and were well publicized through handbills and posters in taverns, laundromats, shopping centers and schools, in efforts to get nearby residents to attend. President Heckel's commitment to full participation was such that he would never cut anyone off from making speeches or asking questions from the floor. As a result, board meetings often went on long into the night.

Tyson sent out form letters to organizations, churches and clubs all over the city, inviting anyone who would read them to come to what he called "a total community meeting." Quoting from a typical letter sent out in February, 1965: "The basic purpose of this meeting is to enable the local community to discuss ways and means by which the flames of crime,

misery, degradation, and poverty can be successfully quenched through the sincere and joint efforts of local 'grass roots' leaders." It was the kind of oversell about the War on Poverty that was heard from many leaders in those days. "Millions of dollars will be available to local communities in the very near future. Your participation is urgently needed to assist in the proper dispensing of these funds."

Tyson considered educating the board as an important part of his job. One of his early memorandums is really a seven-page short course in planning. Cited earlier, it covered such subjects as establishing goals; identifying issues; isolating areas of disagreement; selecting approaches to planning; developing alternatives; and settling on proposals. He was trying to instruct the board, and especially the program committee, in the processes through which programs should evolve.

Besides its executive and program committees, the board had five other committees: building, personnel, nominating, budget and finance, and membership. Tyson hoped to work very closely with all of them, but in the early days, the personnel committee, charged with locating and approving staff, and the program committee, which had to pass on the use of funds, were to occupy most of Tyson's attention.

Tyson took the time with board members to explain the various approaches to planning, and particularly systems planning which was, as he said, "a whole new ball game." He recommended the planning-programming-budgeting system (PPBS) that was just coming into use in systems analysis. PPBS aimed to help management achieve fundamental objectives by making the most effective allocations of resources.

He also recommended "advocacy planning" which he defined as "planning by an independent group with the intention of trying to get their plan accepted by a superior body." It would introduce competition among groups—not a bad thing as long as there was prior understanding that competing proposals would be judged on their merits alone. Whatever strategies were devised would be carried out in a framework of social planning that treated all aspects of community life—physical, cultural, recreational, social, economic, and even spiritual. The emphasis, as Tyson put it, would be on "opportunity, self-development, freedom, and responsibility." Healthy competition, he seemed to feel, would help new groups find strength and focus. As such, advocacy planning went right to the heart of his design.

Cutting in the Poor

Tyson's short training course for the board was but a prelude to the main thrust of the plan—to set up a practical, effective way to cut the poor into the planning process. "Meaningful participation by residents must begin at the beginning of the planning process," he said, because "the key decisions are usually the first ones."

If there really was to be planning from the bottom up, rather than planning from the top down, then there had to be a mechanism by which the voice of the people could be heard. The mechanism that Tyson and Prinz hit upon was area boards.

Looking at a map of Newark, they saw that the city as a whole could be divided into nine areas, based on data that both met federal poverty requirements and also matched more or less recognized neighborhood boundaries. But the idea of "neighborhood," like the idea of "community," can be as intangible as the way people perceive themselves. "Decentralization would work better," Tyson believed, "following cohesive boundary lines, allowing regional interests to be played out in a democratic way." Thus, the UCC did not lay down the boundaries by fiat but consulted neighborhood associations, the Council of Social Agencies, Students for a Democratic Society, and others to determine the geographical boundaries for the nine area boards.

Less than three weeks after he assumed the position of executive director, Tyson wrote the first of his "tactical memorandums" to the executive committee. Its subject was the development of neighborhood boards. "The nature of the challenge today," he wrote, "is one of vesting in the poor the decision-making processes as to what kinds of services are needed, who in their community will administer them, and the right of evaluation of all services that affect their community." Therefore, he said, "it is imperative that local neighborhood boards be developed."

Time was of the essence. The existing network of social service agencies in the city had already written separate proposals for the new federal money and submitted them for the UCC's approval, but, as Tyson believed then (and still does today), "the people affected by the services would have no say if the proposals went through in that form."

The area boards were the key to cutting in the poor on planning, and at all UCC levels. Three representatives from each area board would sit on the UCC's board of trustees, and one of them would also have a seat on the executive committee. More important, at least two of the three representatives sent by each area board must be "poor" by the area board's own definition. In addition, each area board was to send five representatives to the "task forces" being set up by the UCC to plan the various kinds of programs. The independent social agencies or "delegate" agencies allied with the UCC were also asked to include area board representatives on their advisory committees.

Setting Up the Area Boards

Three area boards were created within the first five months. To get them underway, the UCC board first held meetings in the areas, going through what Tyson calls "the hard gut process of getting people out." The early

meetings were designed mainly to orient residents on how the area boards would work. The entire process depended on getting people to volunteer for committees. For example, a committee was needed to write a constitution. Board membership had to be determined, usually by elections. Certain guidelines had been laid down by Tyson. Members of the area boards must either reside or work in the area, and at least 10% of them should be under 21.

Chairmen and acting co-chairmen were also named. "Always make everything 'co,' " Tyson advised. The UCC board and staff gave the technical assistance needed. It was all very loose in the beginning—deliberately so. The UCC staff helped to find space for the area boards, allocated their budget, paid their rent and basic expenses, helped to get furniture. One staff person was assigned full-time to each board.

Each area board would also have a paid staff of four—a community organizer (or executive director), a neighborhood worker, a neighborhood researcher, and a secretary, all recruited from the community. Youth would have the opportunity to be on staff. But the UCC would also pay their salaries directly.

There were other limitations on administration as well. The UCC central staff maintained final approval on hiring personnel for the area boards. Monthly financial statements were to be provided by the area boards (although none was ever needed, since the UCC paid all the bills). There was a specific injunction against the area boards' involvement in direct endorsement of political candidates or participation in partisan political activity, although they could lobby, picket, or stage protests that were nonpartisan in nature, and the staff was free to take political action on their own time. (There was also, of course, an injunction against engaging in illegal activities of any kind.)

What were these area boards to do? They were to organize the poor into a collective power for social action. Tyson saw their role as four-fold:

1. on-going assessment of community needs;
2. developing community action programs related to the more efficient servicing of their neighborhood by private and governmental agencies and organizations;
3. recruiting residents for participation in the community anti-poverty programs; and
4. conducting systematic community research on who needs services, who are participating in the services, and the effects of the services.

In other words, needs assessment, program development, recruiting, and evaluation of Newark's poverty program as it was being played out in

their neighborhoods. The area boards would be encouraged to submit proposals to the UCC for local programs of their own choosing. The programs could include education, youth services, services to the aged, health services, housing, legal services, or information and referral services, but no limitations were formally set on the subject for these proposals.

In a sense, it would work like a jigsaw puzzle. "Big plans are small ones put together," Tyson believed. "People can make their own plans for their own neighborhood projects and have them fit into the community's larger plans without destroying the planning process of the larger unit." The idea was not without realism. "It should not be assumed that community planning is so obviously important and necessary that other interests will automatically be sacrificed for it. Most people," he wrote, "put their own interests ahead of community interests, and so do most organizations."

The Grand Design

Tyson's conception of Newark's poverty program was a "network in which changes in one program can influence or require changes in others." He wanted the UCC to know and understand all the poverty-related programs in the city, how they related to each other, and the specific needs that each fulfilled. This would expose the gaps for which the UCC could seek funding.

It was to help accomplish this that five subject-oriented task forces were created as part of the UCC's early structure: employment, education, special projects, housing, and community action. They were to study the project proposals submitted to the UCC concerning their subject area and recommend their approval for funding or rejection. The proposals would come from the area boards, city agencies, and private social agencies. If approved by a task force, a proposal then went to the board's program committee and, finally, to the UCC's board of trustees.

Each task force had between 30 and 100 members, all Newark residents. But their numbers were weighted. No more than five members of a task force could be official representatives of the area boards. No more than two could come from a delegate agency, that is, an organization receiving funds from the UCC. But no employee of a delegate agency could chair a task force and none could serve on one entertaining proposals from his agency.

The idea was to bring into the program planning process both knowledgeable people who had experience in established agencies and inexperienced people who could accurately reflect the needs of Newark's poor. Even on paper, it was a cumbersome process, particularly in view of the speed with which proposals had to be submitted.

Still, the key to the plan was the area boards. Throughout the UCC's ten-year history, the area boards would fluctuate in numbers, abilities and effectiveness. They would also be the chief target of the city government's wrath, although there are some in Newark who will never be convinced that the Mayor didn't control the area boards. The city fathers could see their threatening potential. Phrases like "organzing the poor," "collective power," and "social action" alarmed them. But not Tyson.

For Tyson saw the area boards not only as key to the program, initially, but as its summit. In time, he hoped, the area boards would be strong enough and experienced enough to join together and become the equal of the UCC. "When they have developed to the point of having a central representative organization," he wrote, "the UCC should contract with that organization" and those on the UCC staff in charge of organizing the area boards "would then become the staff of the boards and on their payroll." The child would become equal to the parent. The role of the poor in controlling their local programs would be ensured. Was it a visionary's dream? Or the paper plan at best of a man who would always be regarded in Newark as an outsider? Or might it have succeeded but for a conspiracy of events?

Needed: A Staff That Can Stand the Flack

It was hard to find staff for the new agency. Not only was it a new field, but, with the Economic Opportunity Act, there was a simultaneous demand for the same kinds of people in every community.

From the outset, there were also demands on hiring from various segments of the community. Puerto Ricans understandably wanted Puerto Ricans to be hired, and other groups, including youth, Italians, blacks, and women, were no less vociferous. The Mayor's office and the City Council took a large and unabated interest in hiring. The UCC's files bulge with letters from the Mayor and Councilmen introducing prospective employees and demanding to know the results of requested interviews of the applicants.

The difficulty was compounded, according to Tyson, by the need to "find those with a political philosophy to involve people and those who could stand the strain." Both were real concerns. Not only would the jobs require night and weekend work, but it was clear from the beginning that, as Tyson now puts it, "the staff would have to deal with the effects of the process." One of the effects of the process was the confusion and discord that would inevitably result from giving large numbers of people a voice in decision-making. Another predictable effect would be an unending battle with the city government.

By April, 1965, a few people had been hired and the UCC moved its headquarters out of the Board of Education to a two-story building at 124 Branford Place. By the first annual meeting in May, only five of 26 staff positions were filled. By June, there were 14 on the staff.

Tyson would never set any formal credentials as a qualification for jobs. Partly, this was realistic in view of the fact that nobody knew precisely what many of the jobs, such as community organizer, would involve and nobody could say what education or experience would best qualify a person for it. Another reason was to keep hurdles against hiring the poor as low as possible.

In creating the new jobs, Tyson was careful about job titles. "Use titles that will have some usefulness later," he advised. For example, he titled people working with the area boards "systems planners," not "poverty coordinators." The War on Poverty was not going to last forever, and when employees would later apply for jobs in business there would be no slots for poverty coordinators because, as Tyson said, "Business has no interest in poverty."

The Money Begins To Come In

Amidst the chaos of getting the area boards organized and the other structures in place, Tyson wrote the first planning and development grant proposal and was told in March by the OEO that $184,000 was finally on its way. It took months to get there, a precedent never to be broken. Bank loans and other borrowing, such as loans from the Mount Carmel Guild, paid the bills until the government check arrived.

In June, the UCC asked the OEO for its first program grant—$4.3 million for programs of delegate agencies, most of the money to go for pre-school education and job training. In July, it received $2.4 million, primarily for the pre-school program.

As the money began to filter in, the interest of city government rose proportionally. The actions of the city fathers heartily endorsed the Shakespearean proposition that, "There is a tide in the affairs of men which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune." They saw the tide of money rising and they wanted in on the power it bestowed.

Chapter 3

The Tension Mounts (1965-1967)

Tyson's theoretical structure for the UCC looked smooth on paper, but no one expected the going to be anything but rough. Indeed, factors in Newark and beyond would combine to prevent the conception from reaching realization. In fact, by the end of 1967 the UCC would be in disarray, attacked on all sides, by city officials, Washington, and even its own constituents, and Newark in the smoldering ruins of a full-scale riot.

One of the major factors would be the federal government itself. Congress enacted increasingly complex measures to combat poverty. The administrators of these measures, notably the OEO and the Labor Department, were often in chaotic competition in carrying out the Congressional mandates. The OEO often seemed to be working at cross purposes with itself. Some of its regional offices stressed "maximum feasible participation" of the poor; some didn't at all, while the headquarters in Washington blew hot and cold about the idea, as complaints from city officials came pouring in. In addition, the mandate to give the poor a strong voice in planning would be cancelled out by steadily tightening guidelines on how categorical grant money could be spent, and ever-increasing cuts in certain categories of funds. Furthermore, early plans for unified attacks on poverty, funneling all money through CAP agencies, gave way to proliferated programs that actually set local organizations, CAPs, and city governments, at each other's throats in the competition for funds.

To deal with poverty, Washington had become a labyrinth of committees, boards, task forces, and agencies. So had the UCC. Its board, which grew to 114 members during this period, spent endless hours in meetings, attending to housekeeping details or putting out fires of discontent, while Washington deadlines on handing in proposals sometimes left only minutes to consider the content of multi-million dollar projects.

The staff was kept busy responding to investigations and charges from city and federal government officials. Tyson regarded such investigations, particularly from the City Council, as a calculated device to prevent the staff from getting its job done.

City government officials never abandoned their attempts to take over the UCC. At the same time, they took advantage of administrative fragmentation in Washington to develop their own very large anti-poverty operation, and garner a harvest of funds. The city stole a march on three central aspects of poverty: housing, job training, and health.

Meanwhile, inexorably, Newark was sinking deeper and deeper into poverty. Blacks and Puerto Ricans continued to flow in, passing whites flowing out, only to find an ever-shrinking employment base on their arrival. The statistics on unemployment, crime, disease, and other indexes of poverty rose steadily. One reporter called the growing pathology of poverty "a spreading death."

A look at the major events of those years, 1965 to 1967, reveals the following patterns.

1965: The City Officials Try To Take Over the UCC

City officials were quick to realize that the UCC, and especially its area boards, which Tyson saw as service centers by day and meeting places by night, could be political training grounds for future opponents. Right from the beginning, as noted, the nine-man City Council tried to win full voting representation for all its members on the UCC board, where each could get early word of available funds, as well as block measures to give neighborhoods control. The Councilmen understood precinct organizations and, to their minds, this is precisely what the area boards could become. As the UCC grew, attacks by Councilmen mounted, led by a triumvirate composed of a black, an Italian and a Jew.

One, the only black on the City Council, was Irvine Turner. He was a full UCC trustee. Even so, he charged in January, 1965, that dissident politicians had muscled in on the UCC to "taint their minds against the Mayor." (Turner had been Addonizio's secretary when Addonizio was in Congress.) The second was Frank Addonizio, who was not related to the Mayor, except possibly in the far distant past. He spurned the offer of becoming an "honorary" trustee and led the attacks against "high-paid outsiders," whom he saw as potential political opponents in an increasingly black city. The third was Lee Bernstein, whose district was changing from Jewish to black, casting his re-election in doubt. Turner, Bernstein and Frank Addonizio, with their willing allies on the City Council, could easily block any vote to approve the city's ten per cent matching funds for the UCC's federal grants. This tactic, coupled with the delay in getting funds from Washington, kept the UCC and its delegate agencies in a continual financial bind.

The Mayor was as determined as the Councilmen to keep the UCC in its place. Who would run what? That was the question. The first clash came early in 1965 over the Neighborhood Youth Corps, which the city had been running. When it came up for renewal, Tyson assumed the funds

would be funneled through the UCC. But the Mayor maintained that the city would continue to be in charge of the program. At the time, the program, to give 350 drop-outs jobs in city offices, was running at about half a million dollars a year. It would soon include jobs in social service agencies as well. The Mayor argued that the UCC was not geared to run city programs and should concentrate on coordinating those proposed by private organizations. Tyson claimed the Mayor launched the Neighborhood Youth Corps project just to beat the UCC out of it. Addonizio won the first round, and the bigger ones that followed.

At the UCC's first annual meeting in May, the Mayor was at pains to define the UCC's role. "We need an organization like the UCC," he began, whose job in the area of social services was "to act as the eyes and ears of the anti-poverty program" and "to suggest and coordinate programs developed from the information gathered from the poor themselves." But he was quite clear in spelling out what the agency's job was not to be. "We have emphasized keeping politics out of the UCC," he said, "but now let's remember the reverse—let's remember to keep the UCC out of politics." He added explicit directions: "The UCC must not concern itself with empire building . . . The UCC's goal should not be to become a major pressure group . . . The UCC's first responsibility is not to sell itself to the public. Its proper role is as a social service agency, advising its component organizations as to what is needed and helping with the immense detail work needed to guide programs through to approval." He was equally clear on his warnings to stay off city turf: "The public school education of the children of Newark is a legal responsibility of the board of education and it cannot be delegated to any other agency." (Translation: don't monkey with the board's pre-school program.) "It cannot foster a program on the Department of Welfare for the Department of Welfare is charged with the legal responsibilities which, again, cannot lawfully be transferred." (Translation: stay out of health and city services to the poor.) "So it is with other city agencies, with the Housing Authority, with county agencies, with state agencies and with most private organizations bound by their own charters and their own laws of incorporation." (Translation: don't encroach on what other agencies see as their turf.) Never a subtle man, Addonizio summed up his message in one sentence: "Political force, my friends, always generates counter-force."

The city's Police Director, Dominick Spina, also stepped into the act. He clashed repeatedly with young dissidents such as Tom Hayden, from the Students for a Democratic Society, and its local offshoot, the Newark Community Union Project known as NCUP. They were the founders of the UCC's area board #3 in Clinton Hill. (Some UCC members,who felt NCUP had unfairly dominated the area board's election, called for an investigation, but were overruled by the majority who felt the UCC shouldn't interfere.)

Despite the attacks by city officials, the UCC was moving ahead. It was becoming a significant employer in the city. After a slow start, there was

soon a staff of 93 and a payroll of $567,000. (The staff peaked at 187 in later years.) The area boards were being organized, three by midyear, six by the end of the year, though some would take a long time finding an office location.

Program proposals had come in, mainly from established agencies, and Tyson was able to persuade critics within the UCC not to block good programs just because they came from the "Establishment." Besides seeking money to get the other area boards going, the UCC had requested OEO funds for the Board of Education's $1.1 million summer pre-school program as well as the year-round Head Start program run by the Newark Pre-School Council which the UCC had helped to set up, for programs to help the aged (run by the Senior Citizens Commission created by Addonizio), along with a proposal to train welfare people for jobs (the Blazer Youth Council), and funding for a small business development center to be run by the UCC. Some of the funds, such as those for the Blazer program, would be held up by the Council's reluctance to grant the ten per cent matching funds, a tactic Newark's other programs didn't face. (The Newark Housing Authority, the New Jersey Employment Service, and the Newark Welfare Division, for example, as Addonizio had made clear, all had federally-funded poverty-related programs that didn't involve the UCC.) Other funds would be cut by Washington, or in the case of the small business project, extended for so limited a period as to make the project meaningless. Then, too, since the signatures of the Governor and two Congressmen were required for any transfer of OEO funds, an inspired mayor could always put a word in a beholden Congressman's ear to create delay.

As already noted, the UCC's first request for program funding was made in June. It was the same month the UCC held its second annual election. Heckel was returned as president; Kenneth Gibson was also re-elected, while a newcomer, Willie Wright, an increasingly militant black from area board #2, was also elected a vice president. Never mind that George Richardson (a black former Assemblyman then running for the State Senate) lost his position as a UCC official. The elections were seen as further proof to the City Council that the UCC was a proving ground for new, upcoming politicians, and a seedbed for political unrest and attacks on City Hall. The UCC trustees' subsequent ruling that candidates for political office had to take a leave of absence from the board didn't seem to matter very much to the City Council.

Halfway across the continent, the same fears were being expressed by the U.S. Conference of Mayors meeting in St. Louis the same month. They accused Sargent Shriver, head of OEO, of "fostering class struggle" by supporting maximum feasible participation. The mayors had reason to be nervous. Syracuse University in upstate New York, for example, had received $314,000 from the OEO to train organizers of the poor to help them fight city hall. Saul Alinsky, the radical organizer from Chicago, had been hired as a consultant. The mayors feared rent strikes, political demon-

strations, picketing of city hall, all of which, indeed, came to pass in a number of cities. Chicago's Mayor Daley complained loudly and a Democratic administration in Washington began to worry about the repercussions. As one OEO official said, "If the mayors of the country knew what they were letting themselves in for, they never would have signed on." By the end of the year, the idea of "maximum" feasible participation was soon watered down by the OEO to mean that only about "a third" of a CAP board had to be representatives of the poor. (Eventually the formula would be tightened enough to practically squeeze the poor out by Congressional amendment.) At the same time, the great by-passing game came into its own. It went three ways. Agencies could by-pass city hall and go directly to OEO. Mayors could by-pass federal regional offices that might be more adamant about including the poor than Shriver was and go directly to Washington. The mayors could also by-pass regular agencies and give their funds to smaller groups. (Within a year Congress, too, would get into the act, by enacting the Model Cities program as a way of by-passing the OEO.) By November of 1965, OEO announced that no funds would go to independent, small agencies or neighborhood organizations if their proposals belonged in city-wide programs.

Meanwhile, in August (when Watts was torn by riots), the City Council formally appointed its triumvirate of Frank Addonizio, Bernstein and Turner to a three-man committee to "investigate" the UCC. Bernstein and Addonizio had been to Detroit where, they discovered, the poverty program was directly under the control of the Mayor and the City Council. What's more, Detroit's executive director was paid $17,500, not the $24,000 that Tyson was soon scheduled to get. The committee was to study the feasibility of applying Detroit's plan to Newark. And all the UCC's requests for matching funds were to be held up pending the investigation, although no date for hearings had been set. This neatly tied up $23,000 needed to get a further installment of OEO's promised money and also blocked, as previously noted, the money ($37,640) to generate the Blazer training project still waiting OEO approval. Only after an anonymous donor (some say it was the Mount Carmel Guild) gave $13,000 to release the already promised OEO funds did the City Council approve the other half needed in September. But not the Blazer funds. After the OEO approved the $338,000 grant for Blazer in October, the matching funds had to be raised through sidewalk appeals.

The UCC board and staff tried to conciliate the city fathers. They held briefing sessions for elected officials of the city and county. They interviewed all the job applicants sent over to them. They responded to all requests for information. They even debated, albeit briefly, whether the UCC had the right to speak out on public issues, such as supporting the civilian police review board opposed successfully by Addonizio. The majority agreed with Tyson that the UCC had such a right.

Still, for all the harassment, the UCC had managed to move ahead faster than any CAP program in the country. In November, it won extraordinary

praise from the OEO, as the nation's prime example of "maximum feasible participation" of the poor. (The OEO's changing stand on the matter was not yet final, nor had it reached all levels of the agency.) "One of the best programs in the country," said one official. "Really a model," said another. "An outstanding effort" to involve the poor, said a third, citing the area boards in particular, along with the Pre-School Council and the Blazer program, finally getting underway.

The UCC had also come to the attention of Congressman Adam Clayton Powell, the champion of "maximum feasible participation" who was about to flip-flop to the other side. Powell had announced in September his intention to investigate the poverty programs in six cities where the poor were excluded from planning, naming Newark as one of them. A month later, he was amazed to learn, from Frank Addonizio and Bernstein, how little voice city officials had in the Newark program. By December, he was advocating a compromise between the "unfortunate extremes" of Chicago, where city officials had the maximum participation and the poor the minimum, and Newark, where the situation was reversed.

In December, the triumvirate Council committee released its report. Claiming the UCC had taken on aspects of a "political action pressure group," it recommended its take-over by a Council-controlled nine-man committee under the Mayor. (At this point, Irvine Turner disassociated himself from the committee report.)

The Mayor also had a grand plan to offer, slightly different from the Council committee's. He would appoint a commission to draw up a master plan to coordinate the UCC and city officials. The Mayor found unexpected support from the OEO's regional office.

Two counter-moves came from the UCC. Its officers tentatively agreed, as a compromise, to double the size of the board in order to give city officials far greater representation (26 additional seats). It also reduced its current requests for matching funds from $152,000 to $33,600, the slack taken up by bookkeeping arrangements of unspent funds. Neither prevented the Council committee from issuing a blistering report charging mismanagement of the agency, fiscal laxity, extravagance, autocratic rules, and, of course, political pressure tactics. Two days before Christmas, Tyson responded with a 78-page paper refuting the charges.

On Christmas Day, a local newspaper, which had criticized the UCC's compromise offer as a "deal" with the Mayor, turned on the UCC again. This time it charged that "outsiders" were being brought in to help organize an area board when too few residents responded to the call for a meeting. The charge was true. There had been a flare-up over the organizing of the last three area boards. City officials claimed nine boards were too many. Not all of Newark was poor. A December organizing meeting for the Roseville area had drawn only thirty residents, the smallest turnout

yet. A little later, over 200 turned out for the Weequahic area, but as *Advance* claimed, a number came, not from the area, nor even from Newark, but from South Orange and Montclair. The ninth area, middle-class Vailsburg, would never get an area board.

The year ended with the UCC under siege from all sides.

1966: The Money Squeeze

The year began in hopes that the tentative compromise agreement to enlarge the UCC board would be accepted by the membership and bring peace. But in February the membership rejected the compromise its leaders had arranged. It refused to add 26 city officials, taking only two more instead, while it added 27 representatives from the area boards, three from each (assuming that there would be nine area boards). Neither Heckel nor the Mayor was happy. Heckel thought the action destroyed a chance to provide a "forum for a really meaningful dialogue." The Mayor said, "I will not attack a decision no matter how wrong I think it is." The board membership, which was open to all who lived or worked in Newark over the age of 15, now had 7 city officials (the Mayor and 6 Councilmen), 27 area board representatives and 53 elected by the general membership—for a total of 87. (This number would slowly continue to rise.)

Political events, in this rapidly changing city, strained even further the possibility of a "meaningful dialogue." In May, Kenneth Gibson, on leave of absence as a UCC trustee, ran against Addonizio for mayor. He had not expected to win, but he drew a respectable one-sixth of the vote. As Addonizio moved into his second term, he let it be known that he expected an orderly transition to a black mayor the next round, while he went on to be governor.

But money, not local politics, was the main problem for the UCC. The city officials may have lost their fight to win control of the UCC, but it no longer mattered very much. The Mayor was winning control of most of the poverty money. In February, for example, the city got a $6 million grant from the Labor Department. The Mayor prepared a statement for the press. "It is a great pleasure," his statement began, "to announce today a series of programs totaling more than $6 million that will strike at the heart of one of this city's fundamental problems—the problem of unemployment and underemployment." The grants were for the Neighborhood Youth Corps, and both institutional skills training and on-the-job training under the Manpower Development and Training Act. The city would administer most of the programs, but other agencies, the Mayor said, would play major roles, citing the UCC among them. One of the roles the Mayor referred to was the UCC's joint sponsorship with the mayor's office of the Comprehensive Employment Program (CEP), the only CEP so sponsored in the country.

President Lyndon Johnson sent the Mayor a two-page telegram of congratulation. "The far-reaching programs which you are launching in Newark today," wired the President, "employ some of the most strategic elements in the war on poverty." What those elements were, the President did not say. Maximum feasible participation of the poor certainly was not one of them.

Beset on all sides by agencies submitting proposals that far exceeded Newark's share of OEO funds, Tyson recommended that the UCC go ahead anyway and ask for more than it knew it could get. Its strategy should be to state Newark's needs. Let OEO do the cutting. But the OEO said that was not the way the game was played. The UCC had to set its own priorities. Earlier, in December, the UCC had asked for $3 million, about a third for administrative expenses, the rest for the city-run senior citizens program. By spring, the UCC was told it could expect $2.3 million. But when the grant was finally made in July, the OEO had slashed it to $1.4 million, cutting the senior citizens program by two-thirds. It took six months to process the grant, which the UCC blamed on Washington red tape, and which the OEO blamed on the UCC's incomplete paper work and "unrealistic" request.

At the end of July, Tyson announced his forthcoming resignation. (It was not unexpected. He had stayed six months longer than he had originally planned.) Since he had taken office in January, 1965, the UCC had received $8 million in poverty funds. Tyson, looking back later, took pride in what had been accomplished before he left. He pointed to two delegate agencies whose programs had been funded through the UCC.

The Newark Legal Services Project had been established to provide legal assistance to some 8,000 poor people a year, the first of its kind in the nation. The Newark Pre-School Council was going strong, and running a year-round program, again the first of its kind. In addition, he said, the area boards were underway (though they were just beginning and their course was far from clear).

To be sure, there were rough spots. Area board #3 had brought down Police Director Spina's wrath again, in a dispute over who would get the jobs to run the summer play street program of the Police Athletic League. The area board charged that none of the jobs would go to the poor, only to police and teachers. When a compromise was offered, dividing the program's personnel committee 50-50 between PAL and the UCC, the area board at first rejected the arrangement, charging Tyson had sold them out. Although the compromise was soon accepted, dissidents from the area picketed the UCC with signs reading, "UCC doesn't represent the interests of the poor."

But the UCC was growing used to criticism and opposition, whatever side it came from. The biggest problem was not local opposition, Tyson said then in a parting interview, but lack of federal funds. "We authorize

dreams," Senator Mondale of Minnesota has said, "and we appropriate peanuts."

Discontent was growing. The year before, the Human Rights Commission had warned of racial unrest, citing poor housing, blockbusting, inadequate recreation facilities, and inadequate schools. The money from the poverty program had hardly scratched the surface.

In September, 1,000 Newarkers hired 19 chartered buses for a "march on Washington" as the House opened debate on the $1.75 billion poverty bill. At the same time, the Mayor joined the UCC delegation to call on Shriver for more funds.

That fall, when Congress passed the Model Cities legislation to give 60 cities $900 million to deal with housing and community centers, Addonizio's aide, Don Malafronte, said Newark's share must be administered by the city government. Malafronte usually represented (and advised) the Mayor on poverty matters, and was to some in his quest for power "the personification of the devil." To plan for the use of Model Cities funds when they came through, a new group had been set up—a six-member committee composed of city officials, clergy, and social agencies. The UCC, pre-empted again, would have one seat.

The year ended discouragingly. The OEO was giving less and less discretion to local CAPs on the use of funds. A regional OEO man pronounced the future "bleak" for neighborhood-developed programs, and programs for the elderly, whose funds were "in some jeopardy." Congress had reduced the number of locally-initiated CAPs, and the OEO had set a $3.2 million ceiling on Newark's funds, nearly $1 million less than the UCC had received the previous year.

The UCC's search for a new executive director after Tyson left had ended, but the appointment of William K. Wolfe, former head of the Westchester Urban League, would turn out to be an unhappy choice.

1967: Year of the Riot

Everything that happened to the UCC and its programs in 1967 is less important than the city's riot that occurred between July 12-18. When it was over, 26 people lay dead, 1,200 injured, and $15 million worth of rubble would mar the landscape.

Other cities, such as New York and Los Angeles, as well as New Jersey cities closer to home, had experienced riots while Newark maintained a surface calm. But the seeds of riot had long been sown. It took only a final bit of heat to cause them to sprout. Already there was controversy, championed in the UCC by Willie Wright of area board #2, over the enormous space, 150 acres, in the Central Ward to be given for the site of the New Jersey College of Medicine and Dentistry.

Although the OEO warned there would be no expansion of programs, the UCC continued to press for Newark's needs, while trying to allot what money it had been granted among its delegate agencies. In March, the UCC announced that it had cut the already severely slashed funds for the elderly in half again, down to $276,000. The announcement, unfortunately, came during the weekend the UCC staff was on a training retreat at a nearby motel, which was to be criticized as a champagne excursion and denounced for its cost—nearly $3,000. Senior citizens, in the snow and rain, came out to picket the UCC. Police Director Spina also attacked the UCC, as the funding for the PAL's summer playground program was dropped. Thus, the UCC was caught in the crossfire of groups competing for the shrinking federal funds. So many persons came to the UCC's budget meeting in March to complain that the meeting broke up in wild disorder when it appeared the area boards would win an increase in their share.

Meanwhile, the contention over the size of the Medical College's site, cutting right through housing for the poor, grew. Blacks began in May to stage protest marches on City Hall over the issue, and, according to the press, a new and unexpected coalition was forming of militants and black politicians.

At a May meeting, the membership suspended the three top staff officials, none of whom were from Newark, and, some complained, not militant enough against the college site. (They were reinstated shortly.) It was the last meeting Heckel presided over.

That spring, president Heckel held a special conference in his office at the law school. He called in a group of blacks from the UCC, some from the board, some from the staff. "It's time for me to resign," he told them, "and for a black to take over the leadership. Any one of you could do it."

There was silence. After a bit, one member of the group said, "Not yet."

"Yes, now," replied Heckel. "Yet is now."

Two at the meeting, Willie Wright of area board #2, and a trustee, and Timothy Still, also a trustee, were, in many ways, typical of Newark's newly emerging leadership from the poor. Still had worked as a garbageman like his father before him. He lived in public housing and headed a tenants' group. If a black took over, the group asked, would the whites on the board fully support him? Heckel said he wouldn't back any individual for the post, but he would get white assurances that they would not leave the board. In a close vote that spring, Timothy Still was elected president only a month or so before the riots.

By then, Newark as a whole had received $26 million in federal antipoverty, health, and training money over a three-year period. But, as one newspaper reporter put it, it "fell through the ghetto like a rock in the sea," so great were the problems, so complex was the pathology of poverty.

The riots began on Wednesday evening, July 12, 1967. They started in front of the precinct house across from Still's apartment house, Hayes Homes, in protest over the beating of a black cabdriver by the police. Still went out into the streets and tried to bring order, but failed. He then formed an emergency committee, and a youth patrol with lime colored arm bands was sent in to cool the crowds. But the youth patrol, harassed by the National Guard, was disbanded. (A similar youth patrol was successful the following year in the short-lived riot following Martin Luther King's assassination.) The riots went on for almost a week, with three-fourths of the city cordoned off. For a time, it seemed the nightmare would never end.

The new executive director, William Wolfe, was in Kansas City when the riot began. He called and asked if he were needed. Still, appalled, told him to make up his own mind. Wolfe opted to stay in Kansas City for the day. When he returned sometime later to his office, he was promptly fired.

The week following the riot, new attacks on the UCC began. Addonizio called for a Congressional investigation, charging that the UCC had inflamed the people and caused the riots. Still was all for an investigation, to "clear the air." Councilman Bernstein took the opportunity to attack the militant NCUP people on the UCC board: "The only thing to do is destroy this commie group and let City Hall take over."

The OEO regional officer demanded that the UCC suspend one of its own trustees, Willie Wright. (Wright had said during the riot that every black man in Newark should not only arm himself but "should have a tank.") The OEO man also asked for a suspension of the UCC accountant, who had been arrested on a weapons charge during the riots. The UCC refused, saying that it would not police the private views of its trustees or staff and, further, that it agreed that blacks had the right to bear arms in order to protect themselves. OEO withdrew the demands. (But, to satisfy Washington, Still agreed to state publicly that Wright's opinions were not the official UCC view.)

Police Director Spina also joined in the attack. The Police Athletic League broke with the UCC. Spina also called for a federal investigation of the UCC, charging that its summer camps were really training grounds for militants and that the UCC had hired addicts, a prostitute, and four persons from the Black Man's Volunteer Liberation Army to run the summer program. Again, Still said he welcomed an investigation.

An investigation of the riots was undertaken later by Governor Hughes' Commission on Civil Disorders. It found the underlying cause to be, not the UCC, but "the pervasive feeling of corruption" in Newark. Its 448-page report would lead to the indictment not only of Mayor Addonizio, but of Frank Addonizio, Lee Bernstein, and Irvine Turner, the council triumvirate, and Police Director Spina.

By September, however, the UCC was under another and more severe attack by the OEO which this time threatened to cut off all funds by the end of the year unless the agency and its board was thoroughly reorganized. Some felt the UCC should refuse to comply with the OEO's sweeping demands, which seemed to spell the end of community participation. Yet a new executive director was needed, and despite objections it was finally decided after a close vote on the personnel committee to hire Dr. Sylvester Odom, a black, from the OEO itself. It would be his job to meet the many standards the OEO had set up to correct the "serious deficiencies" in the agency.

The only good news of the year came at the end, when the College of Medicine and Dentistry agreed to cut down the size of its site from 150 to 50 acres.

Meanwhile, two new personalities had emerged from the riots, who were to figure promimently on the Newark scene. One was the poet-playwright, LeRoi Jones (later to be called Imamu Baraka) who had been arrested for carrying concealed weapons during the riot. He would become identified as Newark's leading black militant. The other was Anthony Imperiale, who had formed a local group to protect whites. "Never Fear, Tony's Here" was his slogan, and he became Newark's leading white militant.

Chapter 4

Newark Turns Black (1968-1970)

Although the Reverend Sylvester Odom had recently been transferred to an African Methodist Church in the Oranges, he knew little about Newark when he took over the top staff job at the UCC in 1968. He was coming into a city that, according to a Rutgers University survey, was now 52% black and 10% Puerto Rican. One-third of the city's 1960 white population had fled. The new population was poor, with 21,000 families on welfare after the riots. Over-all, 8.2% of the population was unemployed at a time when the national average was 3.8%, but between 16% to 18% of Newark's blacks were out of work. At the time of the riots, 78% of the school population was non-white, and the percentage was steadily growing. The statistics on crime, poor housing and unemployment were also climbing steadily.

Before Odom left, the extensive corruption in city government would be exposed, and before 1970 ended a black mayor would be elected. By then, however, the War on Poverty, as originally conceived, was over, and independent CAP agencies on the way out.

1968: The End of "Maximum Feasible Participation"

In part because Odom knew little about Newark, he decided to hire a liaison agent. He created the post of Director of Technical Assistance and installed Duke Moore in it. Duke Moore had been around the UCC from its earliest beginnings. He was one of the blacks who volunteered to be the UCC's president when Timothy Still won the post, and his was one of the swing votes in the personnel committee that brought Odom in. His new job was to be Odom's liaison with the area boards, and to serve as the executive director's eyes and ears in the city.

Odom's first job, of course, was to comply with OEO's demand to get the UCC's house in order. Apparently, the OEO was confident its demands would be met. At a January 4, 1968, meeting of the board, the OEO regional director said that the UCC had "moved very, very well" to correct its shortcomings. "There's still a lot of work to be done," he said, but the agency's financial records had been straightened out and an audit was

nearing completion. There was still the board's reorganization, but he foresaw no major problems in renewing the UCC programs for the year beginning February 1, although Washington still had not announced what funds would be available. The UCC, at any rate, had submitted new requests for $5.7 million in federal aid for itself and fifteen affiliated programs.

Washington was somewhat more confused than usual because Congress had just passed an amendment to the Economic Opportunity Act, offered by Congresswoman Edith Green, which, in effect, removed the requirement for maximum feasible participation of the poor. For the most part, it simply formalized what the OEO was already requiring for the UCC. Yet under the Green amendment, local governments were offered three options to take over community action agencies if they so desired: they could run the agencies themselves as a local government function; they could designate a different group to run the program other than the one currently running it; or they could allow the present group to operate through an advisory board that, essentially, would have no power, while they took over the program. At the UCC's board meeting in March, Odom called the Green amendment a defeatist piece of legislation because it put community action programs at the mercy of a political entity and robbed the people of their drive. The concept of community action, he said, had been worn down prior to the Green amendment but this could be the final blow. How would Addonizio respond to the Green amendment? Odom, along with Timothy Still and several board members entered into conversations with the Mayor. Addonizio was content to continue the UCC as Newark's independent CAP agency, and a motion of intent was even drawn up to this effect.

There was still the business of reorganizing the board and bringing it now into conformity also with the Green amendment which required that no CAP agency board should have more than 51 members. The UCC then had 114 seats. Although a number of them were vacant, restructuring was obviously a sticky business. Yet it got underway immediately to meet the June 1 deadline. The 51-member board was divided more or less evenly among city officials, representatives of the area boards, and the private sector. All but four of the latter were selected by the trustees. The remaining four were elected by the members at the annual meeting, and since precedent soon established that one of these four would also be elected president, their annual elections became hot affairs.

In addition, there was the perennial problem of funding. The money squeeze was getting tighter and tighter for CAP agencies. The OEO regional office told the UCC to submit a budget for the new fiscal year at the same dollar figure that prevailed for the previous budget covering a nine-month period. In effect, it represented a 25% cut in funds. For Odom, the ruling was "tragic." But there was no way out of the mandate. Protests were treated as a pro forma response. A meeting was held with the boards

of all the various delegate agencies to explain the new financial position and decide what to do in the face of such cuts.

While the city had at least gone on record as not wanting the UCC to die, the OEO, operating under Congressional amendments and cuts, had dealt it a crippling, if not fatal, blow.

In February of 1968, the Hughes Commission report on the riots was issued. It was important in several respects. Not only did it attribute the underlying cause of the riots to a "pervasive feeling of corruption" in the city, and call for a full investigation of the Addonizio administration, which, in turn, led to the indictments and convictions of city officials not only in Newark but throughout the state. It also substantiated the charge by blacks that the police and National Guard had, indeed, used excessive force in putting down the Newark riots.

It may have helped to prevent another riot in Newark following Martin Luther King's assassination on April 4, (although there were outbreaks and minor fires). *The Washington Post* attributed Newark's relative calm both to Addonizio's restraining the police and to the emergency committee that Still called together which again sent youth patrols into the ghetto, but this time, in the absence of police harassment, successfully.

Following the disturbance, the city moved again, in the person of Donald Malafronte, to take over the UCC. Odom promptly cut the maneuver short. He went straight to Governor Hughes, who immediately called Addonizio. Addonizio professed surprise. He knew nothing about it, he said. And there the matter ended. A week later, Addonizio named a black as his second Deputy Mayor.

Meanwhile, both the militant blacks and whites were gaining force in Newark, the blacks led by LeRoi Jones (or Imamu Baraka), and the whites by Anthony Imperiale. In April, the UCC filed suit against Imperiale's North Ward Citizens Committee, charging it was a vigilante group. But Imperiale was not to be stopped. He would be elected, first to the advisory committee for Model Cities (over LeRoi Jones), then to the City Council, then to the State Assembly and then to the State Senate. He would become a perennial candidate for mayor.

Baraka's organization, the United Brothers, along with others, co-sponsored a three-day black political convention in Newark beginning June 3. The convention grew out of a black power conference following the riot. Its purpose was to nominate blacks to run for the City Council. (Three blacks were nominated, none of whom won that November, while Imperiale did.)

In July, the UCC's leadership suffered a blow with the death of Timothy Still. His successor as UCC president was the Reverend Levin West, minister of the Grace Reformed Church and one of four vice presidents. A

year later, after he was one of the four elected to the UCC board by the membership at large, he was also elected president. With this, the precedent for electing the president from one of the four was set.

Soon the indictments flowing from the Hughes report would begin. The first to be indicted by the Essex County grand jury was Police Chief Spina for laxity in enforcing the gambling laws. Although his indictment was dismissed in November for lack of proof, the handwriting on the wall had just begun.

1969: The Old Order Fades, the New Arises

The events of 1969 were few but startling. They were to have great effect on the City and on the UCC.

Richard Nixon became President of the United States. One of his avowed aims was to dismantle the Office of Economic Opportunity. Through revenue sharing, he would try to turn over the power and the money for poverty programs to state and local governments.

In November, Newark's blacks and Puerto Ricans held another three-day convention, again with Baraka's organization as a major sponsor, to nominate candidates for Mayor and the City Council. They agreed on Kenneth Gibson as their mayoral candidate.

In mid-December came the remaining Newark indictments. Mayor Addonizio and nine city officials, both past and present, were indicted on 64 counts of extortion, kickbacks, conspiracy, income tax evasion and similar charges. Among them, as noted, were the Council's triumvirate of Frank Addonizio, Irvine Turner and Lee Bernstein.

Also by mid-December 130,000 persons had registered to vote in the Spring mayoral election. Almost half of them (about 63,000) were black and some 4,500 were Puerto Rican. Together, they made up 55% of the registered voters—and more than 70% of the population.

Dr. Odom, pleading ill health, resigned as UCC executive director and Michael Duffy, a white from Maplewood, served as acting director until September, 1970.

1970: Blacks in Power

The year began with a split in the black community and on the UCC board over the forthcoming elections. Most were for Gibson. Imamu Baraka formed the New Ark Fund to raise money for Gibson. But the UCC's president Levin West came out for Addonizio, who despite his indictments,

had chosen to run for re-election. Fifty black ministers also endorsed Addonizio. And George Richardson, Willie Wright and Harry Wheeler, all black, all close at one time or another to the UCC, decided to enter the race for mayor, despite black pleas to unite behind Gibson. Wheeler and Wright soon dropped out of the race, however, and Richardson was to trail behind. But the infighting and charges of "racism" hurled by blacks at blacks were to embitter relations within the black community for some time to come.

In May, Gibson outpolled Addonizio two to one, but didn't win the bare majority needed to prevent a run-off.

Shortly before the run-off, a shotgun blast ripped through West's living room. The 34-year-old minister was rushed to the hospital. He said the attack had been made because he backed Addonizio. Gibson charged it was a hoax, staged by Addonizio. It was never publicly made clear exactly what had happened.

On June 16, the run-off was held. In its biggest turnout ever for a run-off, Newark gave Gibson 56% of the vote. Newark, for the first time, had a black mayor.

West could not run for the UCC's presidency again. He had served the maximum two terms. At the UCC's next election, the presidency was won by Dave Barrett, a 28-year-old data processor whom the trustees had selected for the board a year earlier, and who was closely identified with Imamu Baraka. With Barrett's election, it was assumed that the UCC would become a black organization. But for the first year, Barrett had to work with the more conservative holdovers from the West administration. Odom, who had worked easily in an integrated setting, had left some time before, and, as noted, in his place as acting executive director was Mike Duffy, a white, who had long worked hard for the UCC.

As soon as Duffy became acting director, it was apparent that the OEO regional director's comments in January 1968, to the effect that the agency's financial records had been straightened out was premature.

On November 14, 1969, the OEO advised Odom that funding for programs the next year would be held up mid-way. The second six months would be dependent upon completion of audits of the two previous years, both to be certified by independent auditors. In addition, the comptroller had resigned in November and the replacement acting comptroller resigned in March 1970.

Through Duffy's efforts, the agency hired William W. Bowen in March 1970, as director of financial management. By July 1970, the UCC received the second six months' funding, and by October 1970, all prior program years were audited and approved by the OEO.

The UCC now uses a computerized financial control system, which has been highly commended by the regional OEO and HEW.

If some of those who opposed Gibson (or even voted for him) expected a black mayor to turn the city immediately over to blacks or to Imamu Baraka, they were disappointed. Gibson, who had promised to revamp the Police Department, chose a white to be Police Director (demoting the controversial Spina). It was but his first split with Baraka. For his two Deputy Mayors, Gibson chose a white and a Puerto Rican.

Gibson had his own disappointments. He found corruption even more prevalent than he had feared. (So did Addonizio's jury which convicted him on July 22.) The city was short $60 million of what was needed just to pay its bills. Almost every contract was inflated by a 10% kickback. The need for help was overwhelming. Gibson invited Robert Finch, Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, to visit Newark's slums and see first hand why more funds were necessary. When, on their tour, Gibson took Finch to the UCC headquarters, they were met outside by a "truth squad" of ten blacks who charged that Nixon wasn't interested in the poor. On the contrary, Finch said, Newark was a "target city" in Nixon's urban aid program, and he promised to put more heat on for federal funds.

The state promised little additional help. Jersey City and other towns were jealous of the attention Newark had been getting, and what state money there was, was going to be spread around. About all the State Assembly would offer besides a two-year $33 million medical services grant was permission for Newark to raise its sales tax and add new taxes. Meanwhile, Newark's firemen, policemen, and teachers all wanted raises. The teachers' union alone was asking for an additional $41.2 million.

The schools were always a source of contention. The teachers had already gone on strike for several weeks earlier in the year. About 60% of the teachers were white, and Baraka was calling for a black take-over of the school system. Mid-year, Gibson appointed a black ally of Baraka's to fill a vacancy on the school board. The school board was now composed of four blacks, four whites and a Puerto Rican.

In view of the overwhelming problems in the city, and the inadequate federal and state aid, Gibson limited his immediate goals to cleaning up the slum streets, revamping the Police Department, and consolidating housing inspection, construction, and the operation of housing projects into one department. Health was a longer range target for which he sought and got both state and federal aid.

The measures came nowhere near meeting the problems the city presented. The Black Messiah, as some called him, would need massive help if Newark were to be saved.

That fall, in September, the UCC appointed a new executive director—Alvin Oliver, who had long been on the UCC's staff and was its community development director. He had also long been associated with the New Jersey Negro Labor Council, and still cheerfully avows he will be a communist until he dies. He was the first Newarker to hold the post. Some believed he had been chosen to deliver the UCC over to Baraka.

Chapter 5

The Rise and Fall of the Militants (1971-1974)

During the next four years, Newark continued to be racked by tension, racial clashes, and a general disheartening that cast a pall of hopelessness over the city. The problems grew worse while the hope of solution, in the way of community action or federal support, moved further and further out of reach.

1971: Barrett and Baraka Consolidate Their Power

A second teachers' strike began on February 1, 1971, and lasted until April 18. This strike was far more violent and community-splitting than the last. The student population was now 85% non-white, and many regarded the teachers as "outsiders." Actually, about 40% were black (the head of the union was black), and the whites were divided almost equally between Italians, mostly Newarkers, and Jews, many of whom lived in the suburbs outside of Newark. During the strike, few schools actually closed but half of the 80,000 school children stayed away.

The strike was not over wages but over the new school board's threat to drop two provisions the union had previously won—the right to binding arbitration of grievances and to be free of non-professional chores. Most of the black community was bitterly opposed to the strike. At the outset, fifteen of the striking teachers, black and white, were beaten up by a band of blacks.

The strike was also a power struggle. Gibson's new appointee to the school board, Baraka's ally, had become board president. When three union officials were arrested during the strike, the affidavits leading to their arrest, it was discovered, were signed by Jesse Jacob, the new board president, and two women who gave their address as "Spirit House," a cultural and training center run by Baraka. The union angrily warned Gibson not to take any more orders from Baraka.

On April 6, when the strike was in its tenth week, a tentative settlement seemed in hand, but the school board meeting to discuss it was disrupted

by blacks who were adamantly opposed to the settlement. The UCC's president, Dave Barrett, had tried to get a court order to postpone the meeting until parents had a chance to learn the details. Shortly thereafter, by a vote of five to four, the board rejected the agreement. To Barrett, more than the immediate settlement was at issue. "The teachers are white," he said. "They live in the suburbs. They are insensitive to the needs of black ghetto children." The issue, he said, was "community control" and the people were determined to "have some genuine say." (The same issue had torn New York City apart, in a teachers' strike over community control, three years earlier.)

The strike so polarized the city that racial tension was said to be the worst since the riot. Fox Butterfield, a *New York Times* reporter, who was beaten at the disorderly board meeting that broke up over the settlement, wrote that Newark had become an "angry and anguished" city as the blacks gradually took over "politics, the schools and cultural life." Both Baraka and Imperiale were reported to go everywhere with bodyguards of as many as twenty men. Finally, the strike ended with a Gibson compromise, but the scars remained.

Meanwhile, the UCC was having troubles of its own. Oliver was forced to cut costs to bring the administrative budget in line. Thus he eliminated the public relations department. But he reorganized the staff along other lines for other reasons, as well. Mike Duffy, who had been acting director for nine months after Odom left, was convinced he would lose his current position as deputy director because it was slated for a black. When Duffy took his story with its charge of racism to the press, Oliver fired him. A number of the staff felt Duffy was unfairly treated. In his place, Oliver appointed John Bugg, Baraka's second in command. In addition, Oliver hired ten or eleven of Baraka's followers.

This seemed proof to some that Oliver was indeed delivering the UCC to Baraka. For several years after, there may have been a dozen or more Baraka followers or sympathizers on the UCC board and staff. But appearances were deceiving. Oliver's interest was more closely identified with the UCC's than with Baraka's.

Bugg's title as deputy director didn't last long, however. Oliver soon abolished the position and created two new associate director jobs instead. The new duties were more liaison than head-of-staff. Bugg got one of the jobs and, since a commitment had been made by Dr. Odom to the Puerto Rican community to place a Puerto Rican high in the organization, a Puerto Rican got the other. The shift demoted Bugg somewhat.

The reorganization also eliminated Duke Moore's job, which had been liaison to Dr. Odom. Years later, Moore would come back to haunt the UCC, suing for the way he had been treated. Oliver's alleged comments to the press about "clearing out the deadwood," Moore charged, prevented him from getting a comparable job elsewhere. A sympathetic jury awarded

him an astonishing $44,000 in compensatory damages against the UCC but that assessment was overruled by the judge. Oliver, denying the alleged comments, has appealed the verdict against him.

Oddly enough, for all their apparent similarity, Barrett and Oliver did not get along as expected. Both men were dedicated to empowering the community. Both men seemed to have close associations with Baraka. Both men tended to come down on the same side of ideological goals. Those who observed the estrangement between them saw it as a difference in temperament.

Oliver, a widower with five children who had had to struggle to help his family survive, was a good community organizer. He wanted to see the area boards gain the independence Tyson had envisioned. He encouraged their leaders to form a federation, so their united voice would be persuasive at board meetings—a move other UCC members successfully discouraged. He was full of ideas. But, as an administrator, he felt he had to do almost everything himself. Often he neglected to inform the board of certain actions. Boards can be irritating when they meddle in day-to-day administration rather than sticking to policy-making, but there are simple formalities that must be observed, such as covering clauses in a board's minutes that leave certain details to executive direction, which legally free an executive to get on with the work. At any rate, the matter that brought Oliver into a head-on clash with the Baraka-dominated board was relatively minor. Oliver had hired some consultants on contract without properly informing the board. Somehow the oversight was leaked to a hostile board member. It seemed to him proof that Oliver overstepped his bounds. Oliver's story is somewhat different. There was nothing wrong about his handling of the contract, he said. But there was antagonism about his threat to fire a girl on the staff, a friend of the hostile board member, and about his rebuff of Baraka over the appointment of a Puerto Rican. In any event, the board voted to investigate Oliver's administration. On April 30, before actually firing Oliver, the board appointed Lucile Puryear acting director till it chose a new one.

Ms. Puryear had been on the staff for six years. She came to the UCC in hopes of being a volunteer, but her talents and background with the Internal Revenue Service immediately recognized, she was promptly hired instead as the bookkeeper then urgently needed. She rose steadily from that position to Odom's assistant to administrative officer. Oliver left and, in October, Lucile Puryear became the UCC's executive director.

The process by which Lucile Puryear became executive director of the UCC is even more important than the fact. There were several issues at stake. Would the Baraka-dominated board be able to slip its own person into the slot and thereby complete the takeover of the agency? Would the staff that was unpledged or unsympathetic to Baraka be able to field its own candidate? Did, indeed, the staff have any real strength? And the bottom line was, who, in fact, would run the UCC?

In June, the UCC held its annual election of the four community representatives. It was a bitter contest, for which only 752 of the UCC's 12,000 members turned out. Many saw it as a showdown between Gibson and Baraka. The "Baraka slate" was headed by Barrett, who had to be re-elected to continue as president. The anti-Baraka slate included two Gibson supporters. Gibson himself took no public position but he met secretly with three on the opposing slate, agreeing that Baraka must be restrained. He was reluctant to commit City Hall to the fight, but he permitted his supporters in senior citizen programs and day-care programs to oppose Baraka. The Barrett slate won by a two to one margin. Barrett took the results as an endorsement of Baraka as well as himself. By his second term as president, Baraka's organization, the Committee for a Unified Newark, had gotten a $200,000 grant as a UCC delegate agency to run a Head Start program (the Afrikan Free School, headed by Baraka's wife) and $90,000 for a communications program. (The programs continued to 1974, but not as if they were run by an independent delegate agency. The UCC took over their adminstration later because of, it was said, "sloppy bookkeeping," and they were run as UCC components.)

Ms. Puryear's competence was never in question. The board, recognizing her experience and knowledge of government regulations, suggested that she stay on as administrative head, to serve under an executive director of their naming. The board explained that she would, in essence, be running the organization. The staff saw her concern for them, together with her experience and competence, as a guarantee that the program activities would continue to move forward.

What the board had not reckoned with was having its rule questioned. Never before had the staff disputed a board decision. The first indication of discontent came when a petition to Lucile Puryear, signed by 287 people (staff and delegate agency representatives, a new alliance), urged her to apply for the job. The board said it didn't have to respond to that because the petition was not addressed to it. The next move was to feed into the rumor mill—a relatively easy task since board "spies" were everywhere—the idea that the staff was taking moves to unionize. This reached the board at the gut level and, for the first time, it realized a real opposition was forming. The final staff move was to send a memorandum, really an ultimatum, to the board which, in one sentence, requested an interview with Lucile Puryear for the position of executive director, not later than such-and-such a date.

The reasons behind the staff members' rallying were mixed. First, it was sheer survival instinct. Second, in accordance with the UCC policies, promotion was to come from within. Next, if the Baraka-dominated board were to succeed in getting its own man in as chief, then everybody's job would be up for grabs in the old patronage style. In addition, it was lack of desire to go through another know-nothing administration, with a new executive director who had to start on page one. Finally, it was commitment to the delivery of social services to the poor of Newark.

Whatever the reasons, the tactics worked. The board backed down and invited Ms. Puryear in for a job interview, which lasted a short time. As stated earlier, her competence was never in question. Perhaps it was her lack of enthusiasm for the job that convinced the board that the easiest way to settle the turmoil was to appoint her. This the board did in late October at which time she took over the staff leadership of the UCC.

With Gibson's election, and Barrett and Baraka riding high, the remaining whites in Newark were more than ever determined to have their say. They elected Imperiale to the State Assembly as an Independent to the consternation of the Republicans and Democrats. Each side needed his vote, but neither party wanted to claim him.

Meanwhile, the sores from the teachers' strike continued to fester. Gibson had appointed a 17-year-old to the school board who proposed in December that the black liberation flag be flown in all schools and classrooms with a black majority. The majority of the Board agreed, but the black community was split. The UCC's ex-president West, among others, opposed it, but the red, black, and green flags flew for a month until the State Education Department overruled them, and the flags were removed from the schools.

As always, money was a grave problem. By year end, conditions in Newark were worse than ever. Before the riots, Newark had the greatest percentage of slum housing of any city in the nation. Since then, 8,453 units had been demolished and only 3,907 new ones built. Its schools were no better off. Two out of five had been built at the time of the Civil War. The property tax had soared to $9.17 per $100 assessed valuation, the second highest in the nation. With 60% of its land tax exempt, given over to the airport, the Port of Newark, and various colleges and universities, Newark's tax burden was always heavy.

Jobs in Newark were scarce, and the majority were filled by commuters. Of Prudential's 8,300 employees, for example, only 18% lived in the city. Every morning the traffic went both ways: 55% of the city's workers rode in from the outlying towns, while 41% of the city's poor rode to jobs outside. After five in the evening, the city was left to the blacks; the downtown area was closed up tight.

Gibson managed to secure more federal funds during 1971, including $4.6 million for a new job-training program called Public Employment Program (PEP), and an additional $7 million for Model Cities, bringing its total to $12 million. The UCC, meanwhile, still receiving about $6 million a year, was being eclipsed by the excitement over Model Cities.

Gibson's critics were increasing in number and intensity. The Newark Housing Authority (operating the fourth largest public housing program in the country) had almost lost its federal funding because of wasteful management. The New Jersey branch of the American Civil Liberties Union

had charged that police brutality was rising under the black Mayor. The City Council, with Gibson's acquiescence, was again claiming patronage jobs for themselves, this time ten jobs per councilman under a renewed grant for PEP. By the end of 1971 a State Task Force on Urban Affairs reported that the Gibson administration was riddled with inefficiency, no-show jobs and waste.

The UCC, meanwhile, had received about a half million dollars for new programs and $200,000 for restoration of earlier cuts.

1972 to 1974

As the new year came in, the city agency that had been created to run Newark's Model Cities program was now geared to go under "a planned variation." It would go directly into the wards with health programs and multi-service centers, many of which would offer precisely those services the UCC was originally conceived to deliver through its area boards. A total grant of $7 million was promised, with $1.5 million in planning costs to start. Here, it seemed, was where the action lay, not in the UCC.

After Barrett's second term was up in 1972, the UCC elected a new president, the Reverend Ralph Grant, who, like Barrett, had also run on Baraka's slate. Yet within two years, Baraka's men began to fade away. Barrett, for example, left Newark. Other Baraka followers either left Baraka or left the UCC. By 1974, Grant toward the end of his second term ran (unsuccessfully) for the City Council. Never a member of Baraka's organization to begin with, merely a sympathizer with its goals, Grant tried to tone down the image of his close association with Baraka to appeal to a wider audience. (An outright Baraka candidate was also defeated in the same election.) As far as the UCC staff was concerned, only John Bugg, who had been appointed associate director under Oliver, remained in a position of importance, and he no longer identified himself with Baraka.

Long before that, however, Baraka had turned his attention elsewhere. In 1972, he was planning to build a housing project, for which he had been granted state aid. The site, Imperiale's North Ward, brought instant protest with months of picketing, litigation and financial problems to follow.

In the fall of 1972, the UCC closed out its On-Job Training (OJT) program at state request. Job training had become largely a city function.

In 1973, the old Model Cities program, but not the "planned variation," began its phase-out, as revenue-sharing funds began coming in. (Newark got $12.6 million in 1972 and 1973, but had used the money solely to reduce taxes.) Meanwhile, the federal government was increasingly concerned over the city's handling of its funds. Federal officials had cited irregularities in running the Model Cities and PEP programs the previous September.

In April, the U.S. Department of Labor asked Gibson to remove three top officials of PEP and return almost a million dollars of job funds it said were misused. The director of PEP said the funds had not been "misused" but only used inappropriately. The program, which had received $10 million, was to get another $6.2 million before PEP was phased out in June, 1974. Working for Gibson as PEP's administrative officer was the UCC's former executive director, Alvin Oliver.

In late October, the head of Newark's Housing Authority was linked with organized crime, but a grand jury dismissed the charges. In December, just nine months after Addonizio began serving his ten-year sentence, there was another wholesale indictment of 49 people, including the Superintendent of Schools, on charges of fraud in the school system. Before 1973 ended, the president of the City Council, Louis Turco, was indicted and pleaded guilty to non-payment of income tax.

The UCC began its tenth year in 1974. Presumably, its funding for the future had officially ended a month earlier. Since February, all the staff at headquarters and in the area boards have been placed on temporary status, including the executive director, Lucile Puryear. The end had long been expected, and career training had been offered for more than a year in an attempt to equip the staff for jobs outside the agency.

The city is now trying to do what the UCC was orginally set up to do. Through its Policy and Review Board, mandated by revenue sharing, it is supposed to do the planning, coordinating and monitoring of programs, train staff, and offer whatever technical assistance is needed for the delivery of services. Although Gibson believes in community participation and the idea of planning by area boards, he finds himself almost totally in charge. He receives the federal money; he has the responsibility for planning the programs.

The UCC, however, contrary to expectations, has not ended. Instead, it is revamping its strategies, and in addition has incorporated an Economic Development Corporation, a money-making enterprise that will raise its own funds to serve the poor of Newark.

Chapter 6
What Did the UCC Accomplish?

Over the ten-year period from 1964 to 1974, the UCC received $60 million. If the estimate is correct that half of Newark's population can be classified as poor, the $60 million would have given eight cents a day to every poor person in Newark. Eight cents a day buys a quarter of a loaf of bread. It wouldn't begin to pay for a hot lunch, decent housing, health care services, to say nothing of training for employment.

What did the $60 million buy?

The Area Boards

To answer that question, it is necessary to go back to the original idea of how UCC's program was to evolve. The area boards, once they had organized the poor "for social action," were to be the source of program ideas and dispenser of local services. Tyson envisaged that the area boards in time would federate, and set up a council that would become the equal of the UCC. Its council would contract with the UCC for services, and the area boards would hire (or fire) the UCC's area representatives as their employees.

But, for a variety of reasons, the area boards never lived up to the visionary dreams. First, the city's elected officials saw them, not wholly inaccurately, as a potential political threat. Several area boards did become politically active, and many served as proving grounds for future leaders. An increase in voter registration was initially the result of some area boards' activity. But more than inspiring a few to enter politics and others to vote, the most active area boards began to give the neighborhood poor the exciting idea that they could control important aspects of their own lives. The marches on City Hall, the storming of the school board meetings, even the picketing of the UCC itself, were all manifestations of the feeling that poor people were beginning to develop the power to change things. Addonizio and his associates realized this was a dangerous feeling and thwarted its development whenever they could.

Another factor that thwarted the full implementation of the area boards came from the people in the neighborhoods themselves. Community participation requires vast expenditures of time, which poor people do not

have. The difficulties of making a living, or finding someone to watch the children at home, the fears of going out at night in poor neighborhoods, and the sheer fatigue that poverty brings, all combined to keep participation low. The UCC never succeeded in getting full funding for all the area boards. Only eight of the nine originally suggested were organized (although it was not money that prevented the formation of an area board in Vailsburg but a refusal of the residents to classify the area as a poverty neighborhood). As federal money began to be cut back, so did the funding for the area boards. The peak figure was eight; today there are five. The mergers have obliterated the natural boundaries that Tyson felt was so important in giving people a sense of identification with the boards. The "neighborhood" idea was lost in the shuffle.

The boards, in Tyson's view, were to be service centers by day and meeting places at night. In a sense, they were to operate like the old settlement houses for foreign immigrants, assimilating, educating and integrating newcomers into the greater society. "The idea was for them to become autonomous," the UCC's present executive director, Lucile Puryear, said, "but that got lost in the administrative power plays. If the area boards had become autonomous, then the UCC would lose control." Depending on the UCC's executive director, efforts were sometimes made to encourage the area boards to become more independent. Al Oliver, for instance, tried to talk their leaders into forming a federation, but nothing happened. But others, on both the UCC's board of trustees and its staff, have discouraged them, and made some of their leaders afraid to "step out of line" lest they lose the UCC's financial backing. "They could control the board if they got together," Ms. Puryear has pointed out. Acting as a bloc, they could persuade the majority to accept their point of view.

At first, the most active of the area boards did submit proposals for innovative programs. Preschool programs were innovative in the early days, before Head Start made them common, and some of the neighborhood centers did reach out for the programs just being started by the Newark Pre-School Council. The idea of providing a place for drops-outs to "drop in" for recreation or job-training was quite novel at the time, and neighborhood centers provided such opportunities. Before programs for the aging were fashionable, some of the neighborhood centers had begun offering programs for older citizens. Clean-up campaigns in neighborhoods were undertaken by some of the neighborhood centers; classes were offered in home repair. And the best of the centers tried to address themselves to the needs of their clients, serving as referral centers for drug addicts and alcoholics, and for those needing legal aid, and offering programs that ranged from weight watchers' classes to sports teams to tutoring to theatrical training for adolescents. Following the riots, they served as food distribution centers for the homeless and hungry.

Every area board had a tutorial program, staffed largely by volunteers both from the neighborhoods and from the outlying areas. Some offered high school equivalency courses.

Starting in 1966, the eight area boards were each allocated $5,000 to start their own youth programs, with the youth themselves having the greatest voice in writing the proposals. Karate classes were a standard feature and theatrical training was popular. Most boards had youth councils, and bilingual organizers were assigned from the UCC to help the boards relate to the Spanish-speaking residents. Most neighborhood centers also had Boy Scout activities, black cultural classes, art, sewing, and charm courses.

Most area boards found it difficult if not impossible to deliver services in community research, services for the aged, health services, and the establishment of credit unions, all of which they all wanted to undertake. The best of the area boards helped residents cut the red tape that stood between them and the various government agencies dispensing services. Help in writing letters or making phone calls often opened doors at the Housing Authority, the Department of Welfare, or the Board of Education.

Some of the area boards believed the greatest hope for social change lay in defying the Establishment. The organization of tenants' associations and welfare rights organizations taught the poor how to negotiate from strength with the Establishment. At least one board helped organize a rent strike of public housing tenants. Another assembled a pamphlet on the rights of welfare clients that is credited with changing the attitudes and practices of welfare workers. Legal aid was made available to those whose rights in welfare and other areas were violated.

In defying the Establishment, some boards were often allied with militants. Militant students of the SDS were the founders of one board, the Black Panthers were active in another, and Baraka's Committee for a Unified Newark was prominent in a third. Their programs and services were not particularly militant, however, centering mainly on black cultural classes, preschool education, theatrical training, and serving breakfast to poor children. It was hard to "organize the poor," time and time again, for protest marches that seemed to accomplish little.

The boards also worked with the Establishment. "Political leaders and institutions, local and city-wide, are negotiated with, but consistently," reported area board #7. "There is no lack of communication between this area board and City Hall, Board of Education, Newark library, Newark museum, Essex County vocational schools, Essex County Youth House, local churches, public and parochial schools, United Community Fund hospitals, New Jersey College of Medicine and Dentistry." It even had a work-training program with the Lions Club to orient fifty young people in how to run a business. Many boards worked closely with the police department's Community Relations Bureau to settle problems before they became confrontations.

Yet people began to lose interest in the area boards. Many didn't even know they were there. "I see the need for a massive outreach team, volunteer or paid," one area board director complained, "to further inform this community through any means necessary as to why we are here, the services we have to offer . . . the view of the community concerning Newark's universal urgent needs, and how these needs can best be met." Such a massive outreach was never to be funded. Understaffing and lack of volunteers were to keep many good ideas on the drawing boards.

Time had something to do with the waning enthusiasm and dwindling strength of the area boards. The early relevance of their programs, a UCC staff member said in 1970, stemmed partly from the novelty of the idea of maximum feasible participation. "The area boards have conducted many valuable demonstration projects which truly indicated the local community's ability to organize, plan and administer a great variety of programs," Walter Dawkins wrote in a memo outlining ways to revitalize them. "During earlier years," he said, "these programs were relevant and totally meaningful to the community and thus gained tremendous community support, involvement, and sponsorship. This strange phenomenon was due basically to the fact that the entire war on poverty concept was new and offered tremendous socio-economic opportunity."

"Today," he continued, "there are all kinds of new, exciting programs both underway and proposed which do not basically include the UCC in many fundamental ways. Consequently, the area board concept, having lost its newness, having been stripped of its central role as the community mobilization organization and community action agent, and the area boards, in the midst of the scramble for Model Cities, TEAM, Medical College and Urban Renewal funds, have been left in the dust of the above agencies." "Today," he concluded, "their programs do not have the excitement, challenge or opportunity to which local people will respond."

"The problem is," Lucile Puryear said in 1974, "they never change. If they had money, like the other new programs, people might flock to them. Still most of them do the same things over and over."

With the city having taken over much of the CAP agency's role, with federal support greatly diminished, Ms. Puryear would like to see the UCC's newly established economic development corporation give each of the five area boards $10,000 as seed money, to start whatever revenue-producing enterprises they could to continue the programs or services their constituents need. Already some have raised a little money on their own, from weight watchers' classes or dancing schools, but hardly enough to keep afloat.

Early Childhood Programs

From the beginning, the UCC gave priority to programs directed toward Newark's youngest residents. The emphasis has been maintained through the ten-year period. Today, two-thirds of the UCC's funds are ear-marked for Head Start.

Newark was the first city in the nation to have a year-round preschool program. Like other cities, it had a summer preschool program run by the Board of Education, but its first planning grant included a proposal from the newly-formed Newark Pre-School Council for a year-round program. Classes were held in as many as 56 centers at one time. By 1969, when the Pre-School Council became fully operative, the program was budgeted at nearly $2.5 million a year. In its usual compromise fashion, the funding agency gave the summer program to the Board of Education and the September to May program to the Pre-School Council.

From its beginnings, the program took the comprehensive direction that Head Start was to take, including not only pre-classroom educational experiences but also medical and psychological examinations, a health component including hot lunches, and the participation of parents in policy-making and as paid aides.

Besides the Newark Pre-School Council, three other major agencies were funded in whole or in part by the UCC to conduct pre-school programs: the 65-year-old Fuld Neighborhood House, the Afrikan Free School (run by Imamu Baraka's wife and stressing personality development as well as strong academic foundation), and the Ramon E. Betances Pre-School (for children from Spanish-speaking homes) which later received funds formerly granted to the Board of Education. The UCC also paid the tuition for a number of poor children to attend the otherwise middle-class Hilary School, a private Montessori nursery school for children 2½ to 6.

One criticism of the UCC's pre-school program is leveled at all Head Start programs: that parents are not fully involved. The UCC has provided training sessions conducted by New York University and SEDFRE, to name two, in addition to OCD training, both to help the staff understand the Head Start aims and policies, and to draw more parents into policy-making and programming. Yet it has been charged that the UCC does not communicate with the pre-school centers, that it bottles up information it has received from HEW, and that the staffs are not trained to follow guidelines.

For day-care centers, funding was never forthcoming to the extent that the UCC requested it. Nevertheless, extensive efforts were made to provide them. The neighborhood centers all undertook caring for babies and young children. A Parent-Child Center was established in 1970 to provide comprehensive health and social services and day care for 50 families with children under the age of three. In addition, the UCC worked with the Newark Day Care Council in a program that provided day-care for young children whose parents were in various UCC or city-funded job-training programs.

To coordinate all the early childhood programs, the organization of Coordinated Community Child Care (4C) was set up. An administrative arrangement, it aimed to achieve common staff training, coordinated medical services, and consolidated purchasing arrangements in order to save money. The 4C continues, but there is no evaluation of its effectiveness.

Youth Programs

When the UCC began it was asked to process the grant for the Police Athletic League's summer play street program. As noted earlier, this arrangement led to disputes. An argument erupted between one UCC area board and PAL over who would be hired to operate play streets in a summer program. PAL wanted policemen and teachers on vacation to have the jobs; the area board wanted the unemployed poor to get them. The wrangle was compromised, with neither side happy at the outcome. When PAL's funding was dropped, PAL and the ever-hostile Police Inspector Spina were ready to break with the UCC.

Other UCC youth programs evolved, beyond the summer play street idea. The Youth Development Program, for example, started as a summer recreation program, and became a more comprehensive program offering year-round job training and education. It still had elements of recreation provided by the Fabyan Swim Club and the Timothy Still Memorial Camp in Pennsylvania (Still had been a Golden Gloves champion and coached teenagers all his life), but it also stressed self-improvement through discussion groups and clubs.

Puerto Rican Youth United Program, similar to the Youth Development Program, was aimed at young Puerto Ricans. The Leaguers, Inc. was an after-school and evening program of cultural and social enrichment for young people.

The UCC established a Youth Council early in its history and encouraged young people to propose their own ideas and run their own programs. The age for membership in the UCC itself was lowered to 15 in the first few years and area boards were required to have at least 10% representation from the under-21 group.

Several programs funded by the UCC were aimed at keeping young people in school or helping them if they dropped out. A "Head Start" for pre-high school students was begun in 1965, under the auspices of Seton Hall University, with the participation of the Board of Education and the parochial school system. It offered a six-week educational and cultural enrichment program for young people who would enter high school in the fall. It was staffed by student teachers from Seton Hall.

Seton Hall and the Queen of Angels church joined forces to offer remedial reading instruction throughout the year to students who might drop out of school. Similarly, Upward Bound was designed to motivate disadvantaged youth to continue their education through an intensive summer program reinforced by year-round weekly meetings giving guidance, tutor-

ing and remedial assistance. Newark State College, Bloomfield College, the College of St. Elizabeth, Princeton University, Rutgers University and Seton Hall University were the sponsors.

The UCC proposed street academies, but they were never funded.

Job Training Programs

Many of the youth programs had an element of job-training in them, and some programs focused entirely on job-training and job placement.

The Blazer Youth Council's Community Employment Training, begun in November, 1965, was the first to be funded. The UCC sub-contracted some of its components, such as literacy training, to the New Jersey Department of Vocational Education and the Newark Manpower Skills Center. At first, the program was run independently by the Blazer Council, but charges of mismanagement led to its becoming a component rather than a delegate agency in 1968.

The idea of the Blazer program was to provide work experience for jobless young men and women in order to get them off welfare. Courses were offered in food preparation, upholstery, floor maintenance and automotive repair. One of the linkages the UCC was always looking for was provided by the food preparation component. The trainees learned to cater hot lunches by preparing them for the Head Start enrollees. What seemed like a natural idea became self-defeating in practice, however, with the trainees spending almost all of their time meeting the deadlines for delivering the lunches. They were caught in repetitive daily chores that stood in the way of their expanding their skills. Modifications have since been made, but the problem hasn't been entirely solved.

COPE (Career Oriented Preparation for Employment) was another major youth employment program. It, too, started in 1965, under the United Community Fund and the Jewish Vocational Service of Essex County. In essence, it was a Neighborhood Youth Corps project providing work training experience in social agencies, as well as remedial education, job placement and counseling to high school drop-outs and likely drop-outs. The trainees worked as aides in nursing, clerical, teaching, recreation, maintenance, food service and automotive fields.

Public Service Careers Program, in cooperation with Livingston College and Rutgers University, offers courses of study in community program development to UCC entry-level employees. Life and work experience are counted toward graduation credits so that the students can earn a bachelor's degree in two years. The program continues, and UCC staffers have been encouraged, with time off, to take advantage of it.

Operation Mainstream was directed toward the older chronically unem-

ployed or underemployed worker who, for one reason or another, is ineligible for other job-training programs. SEED (Skill Escalation and Employment Division) was co-sponsored by the UCC, the city, the United Community Fund, the State Department of Education and the State Employment Service. Its aim was to upgrade the skills of people in low-grade machine shop and clerical jobs.

The city ran the Neighborhood Youth Corps programs, although in many cities they were under the aegis of the CAP agency. Eventually, the city took over almost all the on-the-job training programs. Attempts to co-ordinate the programs and agencies and bring them together with the business and industrial sector have been made—a panel was set up for TEAM (Total Employment and Manpower) under CEP (Concentrated Employment Program).

Before the city took over, the UCC worked not only with various city and private agencies in job-training and placement, but also with local business and industry. It had training programs with Prudential, RCA, and with the Port Authority, giving on-the-job training in various fields from clerical work and longshoreman's duties to electronics, as well as civil service job training for the post office and the Department of Defense.

Social Service Programs

All of the area boards offered social services, either directly or by referral. The UCC sponsored other programs in the field as well.

Newark was the first city in the country to set up a Legal Services Project to help the poor. Its board of trustees included members of the local Bar Association, the Legal Aid Society, and the poor, who made up one-third of the board. Created in 1966, it established five neighborhood centers in which attorneys and law students, who served as investigators, handled cases for the poor. By 1970, more than 1,800 staff members had handled 800,000 cases.

An organization to provide social services for Spanish-speaking Newarkers was set up as early as 1967. FOCUS (Field Orientation Center for the Underprivileged Spanish-Speaking) provided counseling and referral services. Five thousand sought aid the first year. FOCUS still operates though it had to close one of its offices in 1970 because of decreasing funding.

Some years ago, in 1971, the UCC began Family Planning Services, after having the proposal repeatedly turned down by the OEO. The aim of the program, operated in conjunction with the Essex County Planned Parenthood Association, is to offer full health services as well as contraception information. In 1972, when HEW took over family planning, the New Jersey College of Medicine and Dentistry and the Association became the grantees.

A Multiphasic Drug Addiction Treatment Center was proposed to consolidate all the services offered addicts by agencies in the city, with the city's Department of Health and Welfare and the UCC cooperating in the venture. It was never funded through the UCC.

Project ENABLE (Education Neighborhood Action for a Better Living Environment), another effort at consolidating services, was funded, starting in 1965. Conducted in cooperation with Newark Family Service Bureau and the Urban League of Essex County, ENABLE aims at helping families improve their conditions through an educational approach to their problems. Parent discussion groups are held on child-rearing, the family, drug addiction and housing problems, as well as community organization. The project continues but without UCC funding.

CASA (Community Agency Serving Alcoholics) is a new program, not only for alcoholics but also for their families. The hope of CASA to open a Halfway House has not yet been realized because of a lack of funding.

The Emergency Food and Health Service was a cooperative effort of the UCC, the city's Senior Citizens Commission, and the Newark Welfare Department. Two centers were set up to distribute food to some 9,000 to 12,000 persons a year. An ear-marked fund, it was dropped in 1972 by the federal government; the UCC ran it another year through its local initiative funds, but could not muster local government support to continue it after 1973.

Senior Citizens Programs

One of the UCC priorities from the beginning has been service to the city's older citizens. Every area board provides meeting space and programs for the people in the neighborhood over 60. The city, however, runs the major programs for senior citizens, although their funding is funneled through the UCC.

The Golden Age Plan, conducted in cooperation with the city's Senior Citizens Commission, created Senior Centers in poor neighborhoods to coalesce services in health, recreation, employment and education. The centers served over 33,000 persons a month at its eight centers when the program received its highest funding in 1969.

A one-shot four-month program in 1966, Medicare Alert, familiarized the elderly poor with available Medicare benefits. A staff of 40 elderly people, aided by volunteers, held meetings, distributed materials, and provided escort services to city agencies dispensing help.

Funding

Program and funding are inseparable in any enterprise, and the UCC is no exception. At its peak funding, in 1970, the UCC was already moving into a kind of entrapment that was to plague all CAP agencies—earmarked funds. Like a family that owed all its income to installment payments, there was no money left for flexibility.

The 1970 budget offers a good example of the bind. The total for all programs was slightly more than $10 million. Half went directly into manpower programs run primarily by the city. More than a third was for Head Start and day-care. The money could not be spent for any other purposes.

With the balance, the UCC had to keep its various constituencies happy. No one, of course, wanted their program dropped. Money could not be taken away from FOCUS without antagonizing the Spanish-speaking residents. Senior citizens, as noted, picketed when their funds were cut. Of twenty programs operating in 1970, twelve were contracted out to delegate agencies with vested interests in maintaining them, and the UCC ran the rest as components. There were never funds to meet the countless requests for short-term aid. There was very little money to hire additional staff, when needed, or offer training to staff on the job. Needs requiring additional funding went unmet.

When faced with the twin realities of earmarked funds and dwindling budget, what happens? The established agencies and the established programs tend to get their money, because they are already well organized and have lobbies. Who is to do battle for the rest? What new programs can be launched? All flexibility had vanished. By the end of the decade, most CAP agencies had become like immobilized giants, tied down by the chains of the programs they had originally begun funding.

For the UCC, the only way out, it believes, is to find new sources of funding. It has established an Economic Development Corporation to generate its own funds. In the process, it can set its own goals of education, job-training, social services, or political action, and decide for itself how to spend the money it earns. This is the new direction taken by a number of other CAP agencies as well. But they need transition time and that is rapidly running out.

Measuring Impact

Probably the weakest part of the War on Poverty was its evaluation. What requirements there were in the federal guidelines were rarely enforced.

The UCC files contain evaluation reports of the various projects it funded or ran, which tell the impressive numbers of people served, but are usually skimpy on over-all evaluation.

For example, the numbers of children who have gone through Head Start programs are high. What they really gained, however, by the experience is not evaluated—in Newark or anywhere else. Did their later school experience wipe out their gains or reinforce them? No one knows. Part of the answer is reduced to gut reaction. Surely, giving thousands of poor children a hot meal once a day is better than letting them go hungry. Certainly, finding children who need glasses or hearing aids and equipping them before they go to school is preferable to not locating them. The three-year-olds of 1964 were only thirteen in 1974. We don't yet know if they will graduate from high school or, if they do, how can we tell what part of their persistence can be attributed to Head Start?

The UCC programs in total employed 3,000 people, a large proportion of whom would not have had work through these years without the UCC. Various estimates ranging from 60,000 to 100,000 are given for those who received the UCC services. Would the poor whose cases were taken on by the Legal Services Project have received legal help without it? Probably most would not. And how does one weigh the value of increased self-esteem brought about through participation in a youth program or a black culture group?

The problems that Newark's CAP agency set out to solve are still there. In the UCC's refunding proposal in 1973, there is a blunt statement:

"The fact of the matter is that although the United Community Corporation has administered programs to assist the underprivileged on a city-wide basis since 1964, and has addressed its physical, technical and monetary resources toward this end, we have—statistically, perhaps—as many persons in Newark desperately in need of services as there were at the outset of the anti-poverty program. The faces have changed, but the problems remain, largely due to the mass influx of persons from the South arriving in Newark, totally unprepared for urban life and at the mercy of a city that repeatedly denies their existence."

This statement could be used by either side in debating the value of the War on Poverty.

AN EPILOGUE:

Where Have We Been? Where Are We Going?

In the fall of 1974, the fate of the nation's 973 community action agencies hung in doubt. The OEO had been stripped of most of its programs. Whether the few that remained to it—community action, legal services—would continue in a single federal agency, or be submerged in other federal departments was not yet known. In any event, the War on Poverty was over. The noble experiment begun with such fanfare ten years ago was done.

Had it all been an impossible dream? A mistaken idea? A flight from the reality of politics and the nature of man?

Or did we learn something from it we couldn't have otherwise? What did it all mean?

There were failures, certainly. Scandals, too. And yet accomplishments as well. We may have emerged better prepared for the road ahead, a longer, harder road than we first imagined, and all up hill. Along the way, we have learned more about the politics of poverty, and more about the dynamics of poverty itself. At various levels, we know better how to cope, and we know better what we are coping with. But what comes next?

Some insight about where we've been, and where we're going, is gained from a brief but frank discussion held in July, 1974, with the executive director of Newark's United Community Corporation, Lucile Puryear. Ms. Puryear has been with the agency since 1965, when it was just getting off the ground. She has seen it from a longer range and greater perspective than most. She came as a volunteer, was hired as a bookkeeper, organized the agency's financial records, and also participated in meetings to set up an area board for the Weequahic section of Newark in which she lives. She then moved into administration and served as executive assistant to a former director, Dr. Sylvester Odom, for two years. In early 1971 she became acting director of the UCC, and beginning in the fall of 1971, served as executive director. As recounted earlier, her elevation to the top position, at a time when extremists threatened to take over the pro-

gram, was due to the demand of the staff. If Ms. Puryear's experience makes her a good choice to interview, her sometimes unexpected candor makes the dialogue even more worthwhile.

Q. **You have been with the UCC for nine of its ten years. Has its place in the community changed in that time? In what way?**

A. Its original place was a myth.

Although the climate of the nation has changed, this in itself does not account for the change in the UCC's place in the Newark community. The community long ago learned that the promises of self-determination and decision-making by the poor, and of many jobs for the poor in programming and planning their own destinies, were the products of someone's vivid imagination.

Now it's like a deferred dream. Or a dream held in abeyance. Which way will it go? Maybe it's a dream we don't know what to do with.

As Langston Hughes once wrote, "What happens to a dream deferred? . . . Does it dry up like a raisin in the sun? . . . Maybe it just sags like a heavy load. Or does it explode? . . ."

Q. How has the UCC survived this long?

A. There are several reasons. We have made charges of mismanagement or misuse of funds impossible to sustain by adhering to the specific guidelines laid down in 1967 for CAP operations. The earlier guidelines were sketchy and subject to many interpretations. In 1967, new and stringent guidelines were issued for CAP agencies. The UCC has followed all guidelines issuing from the national office from 1964 to the present.

Another reason we survived is that the UCC's basic goals and objectives, despite the myths that originally surrounded them, have not changed. The UCC still strives to resolve the major problems that affect the poor of Newark.

Last, but by no means least, the ability of the staff has been crucial to the UCC's survival. Although CAP agencies were to play the part of training grounds for community people, it was unrealistic to assume that the anti-poverty corporations needed any less talent than a successful business corporation. Talented and productive members of the staff were recognized and, as with successful corporations, given incentive to remain with the UCC, and placed in administrative positions whenever possible.

Q. **What were the main accomplishments of the UCC?**

A. It has raised the level of political awareness in the community.

Currently, there are five black elected officials who have had close relations with the UCC. One is the Mayor, who was a vice president of the corporation; four are Councilmen, three of whom were former employees and the fourth an area board chairman.

It has brought a flow of federal dollars to the city that the city would not have had otherwise.

It has integrated a good number of the underemployed and so-called "unemployable" into the American business system, or what I call the "grey flannel suit" syndrome.

Former porters and dishwashers, day laborers, were all exposed to the American bureaucratic office system and provided with the opportunity for upward mobility.

At its peak, the UCC employed 685 people, many of whom were taken off the welfare rolls or had been unable to find adequate work. Just because someone was poor, however, didn't mean he would get a job with the UCC. Employees had to have some skills, but on-the-job training could make up for many deficiencies.

If they learned from their UCC experience, in this age of expanded opportunities for blacks, they could transfer their lessons into a business and industrial setting, which some have done. If they learned little, they are probably still stuck with the "poverty syndrome."

The staff has also been given released time for education or training (up to 20 hours per week), with the UCC paying for tuition and books if needed. There is also a work-training system available for staff which pays them full salary for part-time work if the training programs they enter offer no stipend while they are training.

It has stimulated community organization.

The UCC has provided the setting for the non-articulate to articulate their own opinions and desires, and helped them to form organized groups.

It has also helped them thread their way through the bureaucracies to get the social services they are entitled to. This, in turn, has improved the agencies' services. By teaching the poor their rights, and keeping them abreast of any changes or additions to their rights, the UCC has more or less forced the agencies—whether welfare, hospitals, family services, or whatever—to make the effort to keep up with the latest regulations too. In that way, the UCC has acted as a prodder, keeping the agencies up to the mark. As a result, bureaucrats tell me, their jobs have become harder, but more meaningful, too.

Q. **What are the real political, economic and community hurdles for an agency such as yours?**

A. Politically, the main problem is to maintain the agency as an independent community force. City officials have their own priorities, among which the UCC has not yet been included. Inevitably, their political interests are overriding, and intrusive. City governments usually pay too much court to political patronage, often mismanage both programs and funds. An agency of the community, by the community, and for the community cannot afford that kind of operation.

In a different political area, there's the problem of achieving meaningful participation of elected officials on our board of trustees.

Economically, we've never had enough money to provide the services for programs we need. Further, priorities are set on a nationwide basis, and the type of services to be provided are determined at the national level. But national priorities are not necessarily relevant to Newark's specific needs.

On a community basis, our main hurdle has been the task of establishing rapport with established social action groups of the city, such as the NAACP, the Urban League, CORE, and the Urban Coalition. If all the agencies would only get together to combine efforts and coordinate services, these efforts would not be viewed as competition. There was a lot we could have learned in the beginning from the other agencies if they hadn't viewed us as a threat. They could have been valuable resources.

Q. **How do you think the problem of coordination might be solved?**

A. It's not really solvable.

However, if we paid more attention to coordinating services, rather than coordinating administrations, we could at least accomplish a better delivery of services. The problem is that everyone talks about coordinating programs, but no one is willing to give up any sovereignty. No one wants to lose a directorship or be edged out of their turf.

The coordination of federal dollars is really secondary. What should be of primary importance is the coordination of services. Some efforts have been made in the Model Cities program, and now in Early Childhood Development, but through a coordinating entity which poses the same kind of threat to Early Childhood administrators. A special entity isn't needed. What's required is the identification of all the services available in the city. This could be done by calling a central meeting of all the agencies and groups involved to identify what services they are giving. Then they could talk about whether these are the services the community needs, set priorities, and coordinate their plans.

Witihout such coordination, gaps will continue, and even some services die. In 1974, for example, there were 43 day-care centers in Newark. State money for them has been stopped, but the city has allocated $550,000 for day care. Yet what has the city done? To gain publicity and credit, it has proposed to open new centers, and, as a result, let other, needed centers close.

Since everybody has his own hidden agenda for his turf, it's going to be a long, long time before we get real coordination.

Q. **What's it really like for a director of an agency like yours to be on the firing line?**

A. One of the hardest things is that every individual, inside or outside the agency—board member, staff person, reporter, community representative, or whoever—feels that their problem is the most pressing and urgent one of the moment and needs my personal attention for an immediate resolution. One feels fragmented by so many demands for personal attention.

It's also difficult to delegate responsibility. Most people, I find, don't want to take responsibility if there's a chance someone else might take it for them. I get tired of the constant, repetitive requests for decisions.

At the regional and national level, it can be frustrating to deal with bureaucrats who often seem to be more concerned about their interdepartmental jurisdictional disputes or status than they are aware of the function or purpose of the job they are supposed to do.

I get angry at times, discouraged at times. Some days I just want to give up. But not for long.

It's a lonely job. But when I know that I've accomplished something for someone, or for the agency, it seems worthwhile.

Q. **How do you deal with a hostile board?**

A. You deal with it, however you can. Usually it's not an entire board that is hostile but a few individuals. You have to make a special effort to identify who they are and what's making them hostile. Even then, it's not easily resolved. Sometimes it's impossible to resolve. If the entire board is hostile, you have no business being its executive director.

Q. **What are the real rewards of being the executive director ?**

A. Personally, I never wanted to be the director. The status that attaches to it is, if anything, an impediment. Leadership doesn't depend on a title, but on the achievements one can set in motion. You don't have to be director to be a leader.

Yet it offers good pay, and this is a real reward. So are feelings of accomplishment. So are feelings of trust. Of course, it's rewarding to be formally

recognized as a leader, but only if the recognition is based on achievements, not on status.

Q. **Where is the UCC going?**

A. There is an underlying premise that to get people out of poverty you must put money in their pockets. There are two ways to do this. One is the job route, providing jobs or training people for them. The other is the business route.

UCC's new thrust, without ignoring community services, will be on economic development through minority enterprises. We hope to offer training and technical assistance to minority enterprises, and invest in such businesses or establish them ourselves.

In other words, the UCC will try an economic development thrust while continuing our social responsibility.

There is a time for change, and we're far behind schedule on it.

Some of the essential things that community development set out to do, it did. It organized people behind issues, it made the poor articulate, it taught the community the ropes—politically, socially, educationally, and, to some extent, economically. Since the heyday of OEO-initiated community development centers in Newark, we have seen the development of countless others in the city. They may be called by different names, but essentially they duplicated services provided through the UCC.

No cause for alarm. This was as it should have been. The UCC was the pilot, and if we were emulated, it was because we were successful. But as engineers of new social programs, we failed to follow up our early success. We allowed ourselves to stagnate. Where would the Ford Motor Company be if it had decided that the successful Model T was the only car it should ever build?

The purposes and goals of neighborhood centers should have changed as the communities' needs and priorities changed. If the neighborhood center concept is to be kept alive, each of the UCC's centers must develop plans for change that are relevant to today's needs and which will stimulate community participation.

Neighborhood centers should be able to answer the following questions in a way that reflects the changes in the city and their own constituencies during the past ten years:

- What are your plans for change in the operation of your neighborhood center?
- If you were an independent agency, not dependent on the UCC, what would you do differently?

Q. **If the nation is serious about eliminating poverty, what must happen?**

A. Harry Truman said that to get a decision of his translated into policy practically required public executions.

Lyndon Johnson said the only thing he could really accomplish was a nuclear war.

And you ask me, if the nation is serious about eliminating poverty, what must happen?

Highlights of the UCC: 1964–1974

1964 A CAP Agency Is Born

January: President Johnson calls for a War on Poverty.

August: Newark's Mayor meets with community leaders to form a CAP agency. Later that month, the Economic Opportunity Act is signed.

November: The UCC is organized as the CAP agency. Dean Heckel is board president.

December: A start-up kitty is raised, and Cyril Tyson is hired as executive director.

1965 City Tries To Take Over the UCC

January: The UCC begins a membership drive and starts to set up area boards.

June: The nation's mayors, meeting in conference, charge the OEO with "fostering class struggle." The UCC gets its first program grant, most of the money earmarked for other agencies' programs.

August: Newark's City Council appoints a committee to "investigate" the UCC.

November: The OEO praises the UCC as a "model" CAP agency.

December: The Council committee recommends the City Council take over the UCC.

1966 The Money Squeeze

February: The Mayor wins control of the major share of federal money for job training and youth programs.

July: The OEO cuts back the UCC's program funds.

December: Congress passes Model Cities legislation, reducing the OEO's sphere of action. The future of CAP agencies, the OEO says, looks bleak. Tyson has left the UCC; William Wolfe is executive director.

1967 Year of the Riot

March: Senior citizens picket the UCC as their program funds are cut back further.

May: Blacks stage a series of demonstrations at City Hall in protest to the site chosen for a medical school.

June: Heckel retires as the UCC's president; Timothy Still is elected in his place.

July: The riots erupt. The Mayor blames the UCC as the cause. Baraka emerges as a leader of militant blacks.

September: The OEO threatens to cut off all UCC funds unless the agency and board are reorganized. Dr. Sylvester Odom of the OEO is hired as executive director.

1968 The End of "Maximum Feasible Participation"

Spring: Congress has passed the Green amendment, which limits the size of CAP boards and permits local governments to take over CAP agencies. But Newark's Mayor is content to let the UCC remain independent since he already controls the major share of job training and Model Cities programs.

The UCC meets the OEO requirements; its board is to be reduced in size.

The OEO cuts the UCC's funds back 25% for the upcoming year.

July: Timothy Still dies. The Reverend Levin West becomes president.

1969 The Old Order Fades

January: Nixon is President, and expected to dismantle the OEO.

November: A black and Puerto Rican convention in Newark nominates a black for mayor. Newark is now 70% black and Puerto Rican.

December: The Mayor and other city officials are indicted for bribery and extortion. Dr. Odom has resigned; Michael Duffy takes his place as the UCC's acting executive director.

1970 Blacks in Power

Spring: The UCC board is split over mayoralty election.

June: Newark elects its first black mayor, Kenneth Gibson. The UCC elects Dave Barrett, a Baraka associate, as president.

September: Alvin Oliver is appointed UCC executive director.

1971 The Rise of the Militants

April: Oliver leaves. Lucile Puryear becomes acting executive director.

June: A Baraka slate wins the UCC election for community at-large representatives on the board.

October: The UCC staff forces the Baraka-dominated board to appoint Lucile Puryear executive director.

1972 A Dying CAP Agency

January: The city, with new Model Cities funds, prepares to set up multi-service centers to supply services similar to the UCC's area boards.

June: The UCC elects the Reverend Ralph Grant, who had run on Baraka's slate, president.

Fall: The UCC closes out its on-job training program.

1973 The City Has It All—Almost

The city, through its Policy and Review Board, is now doing what the UCC was originally set up for—planning and coordinating programs, providing technical assistance, and so on.

1974 An End or a Beginning?

February: The UCC staff goes on "temporary" status. Its funding is "officially" supposed to end. The number of its area boards has been reduced from 8 to 5.

June: The UCC elects its community at-large representatives. Baraka followers have begun to fade away. A new image of the UCC is emerging.

August: Daniel Webster becomes the UCC's president. New representatives of the business community join the board. The City Council takes a renewed interest in cooperating with the UCC.

Fall: The UCC has established an Economic Development Corporation as a money-making enterprise to keep the UCC's programs going. The future has possibilities, after all.

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